

## London rolls out UK's first low emissions zone

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The City of London has established the UK's first low emissions zone, imposing charges on heavy polluting trucks in an attempt to clean up air quality in and around the capital.

A daily charge of £200 (\$395) will be levied against diesel-engined lorries, coaches, buses, minivans and hearses over 3.5 tonnes which do not meet European Union pollution standards. The Road Haulage Association has estimated that nearly 20,000 goods vehicles will be affected.

The £49m scheme will use cameras to check licence plates against a DVLA database of licensed vehicles, and those who refuse to pay will be fined £1,000.

Mayor Ken Livingstone said the initiative was intended to cut air pollution in London, the worst in the UK and among the worst in Europe.

"Thousands of Londoners suffer ill-health from pollution released by traffic fumes," he said in a press release. "In a modern world city, people should have the opportunity to live and work without fear of being poisoned by the air they breathe."

Air pollution in London currently exceeds EU emissions standards, and this scheme is projected to reduce around 16 per cent of pollutants by 2012 in the most heavily polluted areas. Supporters say the plan could result in over £250m in health benefits.

The zone affected covers most of Greater London, and stretches across an area of 610 sq miles (1,580 sq km), including the M1 and M4 motorways. However, the M25 motorway is not included.

Further regulations will begin in 2010, when diesel-engined light goods vehicles and minibuses over 1.2 tonnes will also be affected.

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