

"Diesel Smell" Complaints in Ford E-450's

Information compiled January 27, 2006

The Question: Has anyone dealt with "diesel smell" complaints (from drivers and passengers) in the interior of Ford E-450's (ours are being used for paratransit service)? If yes, what did you do to correct the problem? If not, is there anything you can recommend on correcting the problem?

Ben Franklin Transit says... I've asked our maintenance personnel to respond to what, if anything, they have been able to do. I haven't heard this type of complaint for the longest time from our staff or customers. One reason is that we are moving from diesel to gas on many of our vehicle purchases. Occasionally, this has come up in the past and usually could be traced to a mechanical problem that once repaired was no longer an issue. Sometimes, at idle while loading a wheelchair customer and with the doors open you can smell diesel. There was at one time a discussion, as I recall, about redirecting the exhaust but it seems there was some type of warranty issue that prevented us from doing so.

Clallam Transit says... We have not had any recent complaints. One thing to make sure the tailpipe is exiting at the left rear (drivers side) of the bus.

Columbia County Public Transportation says... We use the same vehicles with our paratransit service but do not seem to hear many complaints on the diesel smell in the interior.

CUBS says... We don't recall any incidents.

Everett Transit says... We do not use diesel engines in our Paratransit type vans.

Grays Harbor Transit says... We have had no complaints.

Intercity Transit says... As far as the exhaust smell issue, we have experienced this in the past and it usually occurs in our bus yard when the busses are first started in the morning. With so many vehicles running the exhaust fumes are excessive and the get drawn into the heater system and dispersed inside the vehicle. This can be a real problem when it is very cold outside and no wind. The exhaust system needs to be checked from the engine to the tail pipe. We have had turbo pipes leaking and tail pipe routing issues also.

Jefferson Transit says... We do not have any of those complaints. The only suggestions would be exhaust fumes coming in when the passenger doors are open. We use Biodiesel and so do not have exhaust odor.

Kitsap Transit says... We do not receive many complaints regarding diesel smell in the E-450's. Our exhaust exits on the street side away from the doors, and in most cases if we do receive a complaint, we find that a seal around a window has failed. We did have some early on issues with cracked turbo pipes (between the header and turbo) on our International vehicles (same engine in the E-450's). The original pipe was rigid, the new one is flexible. The same pipe is on late model E-450's so you may want to have someone look at them to make sure there are not cracks.

Link Transit says... We have not had any complaints about diesel smells from cutaway vehicles.

Mason Transit says... There are lots of things that can cause a "diesel smell" inside the driver/passenger compartments. We occasionally have a complaint and basically respond by troubleshooting the exhaust system and locating the trouble. The questions I have would be, is the exhaust system vented out to the road side away from all passenger entry locations? When was the last time the exhaust system was thoroughly inspected? Occasionally the Ford Diesels have problems with oil leaks at the fuel delivery area requiring a simple o-ring replacement kit at either the turbo or the fuel pump or both. This can cause a smell in the compartment as well if the engine cowling or "dog house cover" does not seal well. At any rate, I believe that proper inspection and troubleshooting procedures would alleviate the problem.

Pullman Transit says... I have not had any complaints as of yet. We only have one van with the 6.0L engine in it. I just received a Ford recall on Wednesday that may help this problem. The recall number is 05E15.

Skagit Transit says... None reported.

Whatcom Transit says... WTA runs 100% gasoline engines in the E450 due to customer complaints about noise and exhaust smell from the Ford diesel engine. We do find that the interior engine compartment cover (doghouse) can come loose and allow engine compartment smells into the vehicle. I suggest that our WSTIP partner double check the doghouse latches and seals to ensure that they are tight.