



NEWS RELEASE

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Release Date: November 14, 2006
Release No.: 07-06

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EPA and SBA Announce New Loan Initiative for Trucking Industry

Richmond, Va. – The U.S. Small Business Administration’s Richmond District Director Ronald E. Bew announced today the availability of an innovative application of the agency’s financial assistance programs that will help small trucking companies pay for fuel saving technology and cut overhead, while also reducing pollution.

The partnership between SBA and the Environmental Protection Agency was developed under the EPA’s SmartWay Transport Program to make commercial loans available to qualified business owners. The loans are funded with the cooperation of commercial lenders using the SBA’s loan guaranty program. EPA’s SmartWaySM Transport Program is an innovative public private partnership designed to improve the environmental performance of the freight delivery system in the United States through money saving, market-based approaches. The primary goal is to accelerate the deployment of cleaner, more fuel efficient transportation vehicles and technologies to improve energy security and air quality, and promote economic growth in the transportation industry.

“We are excited at this opportunity to help the trucking industry save both fuel and money while reducing pollution,” Bew said. “While this loan initiative was created in Virginia, this partnership between the EPA and the SBA is a nationwide one. Truckers anywhere in the country can contact one of the participating lenders to apply for financing.”

For a list of lenders participating in the program, visit the EPA SmartWay Transport Program website at <http://www.epa.gov/SmartwayLogistics/financing.htm>.

Lenders may use the *SBAExpress* and *SBA CommunityExpress* Loan Programs to offer this innovative financing. These two programs have an expedited loan approval process that minimizes paperwork and the time necessary to get a loan decision. The maximum loan amount for *SBAExpress* is \$350,000, and loans up to \$25,000 may be unsecured under both *SBAExpress* and *SBA CommunityExpress*. The maximum loan amount for *CommunityExpress* is \$250,000.

Bew said that he anticipates the two loan programs will meet the financial needs of the majority of clients in the trucking industry. These programs provide loan guaranties that encourage private sector lenders to make loans to small businesses unable to secure financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. The eligibility requirements are broad to accommodate a diverse variety of small businesses. Some of the lenders may offer loans requiring no collateral, loan amounts from \$5,000 to \$25,000, an easy on-line application, and 7-10 year terms.

“The SBA *Express* and SBA Community *Express* Programs are streamlined loan programs which support the President’s commitment to making it easier and less expensive for people to do business with SBA,” District Director Bew said. “Since the President came into office, the Administration has doubled the number of small business loans.”

The Express loan programs will help small trucking companies finance the purchase of fuel saving technologies, including idle reduction devices, low rolling resistance tires, advanced truck and trailer aerodynamics, and diesel engine retrofits. All four technologies combined on a long-haul truck can improve fuel efficiency by 10 to 15 percent, and save over 2,800 gallons of fuel and several thousand dollars in fuel costs annually.

In the Small Business Act of July 30, 1953, Congress created the U.S. Small Business Administration, whose function is to *"aid, counsel, assist, and protect, insofar as is possible, the interests of small business concerns."* Since its founding more than a half-century ago, the U.S. Small Business Administration has delivered about 24 million loans, loan guaranties, contracts, counseling sessions and other forms of assistance to small businesses.

EPA’s mission is to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment – air, water and land – upon which life depends. For more than 30 years, the EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people.

The SBA also helps people recover from disasters and rebuild their lives by providing affordable, timely, and accessible financial assistance to homeowners, renters and businesses. The charter also stipulated that the SBA will work to ensure small businesses receive a "fair proportion" of government contracts and sales of surplus property.

For more information about the SBA online, go to www.sba.gov or contact the Richmond District Office at (804) 771-2400.

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