

Acid rain control program to protect environment

On March 6, prior to the Canada-US summit in Quebec City between Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and President Ronald Reagan, Environment Minister Suzanne Blais-Grenier announced the first major environment program of the new government. Describing it as "a landmark decision in environmental protection in Canada", Mrs. Blais-Grenier called it a comprehensive emission reduction and funding package to combat the acid rain problem in the country.

Mrs. Blais-Grenier indicated that Canada is the first country to officially adopt as policy, a specific environmental objective designed to significantly reduce acid rain levels. In addition, she noted "that the reductions in sulphur dioxide emissions outlined in the Canadian program make it a truly ambitious national acid rain program".



Suzanne Blais-Grenier

Major elements of the package include: the adoption of a specific environmental objective; tough new motor vehicle emission standards; funding to assist in a domestic clean-up program; maintaining a world-class scientific research and monitoring program; and the establishment of an acid rain office. The federal program package is based on the commitment of the federal and six provincial governments made on February 5, to reduce sulphur dioxide emissions in eastern Canada by 50 per cent by 1994.

Environmental objective

The aim of the new program is to eliminate the harmful effects of acid rain, which is caused when sulphur-dioxide and nitrogen-oxide emissions combine in the atmosphere and fall back to earth in rainfall. It has been linked to the environmental death of lakes, respiratory problems, and forest and building damage.

To achieve the new objectives, emissions of sulphur dioxide will be reduced to no more than 2.3 million tonnes east of the Saskatchewan/Manitoba border by 1994.

Tighter emission standards

Cars emitting nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and lead are the largest single source of these pollutants in Canada and contribute significantly to air pollution in cities and to the acid rain problem in the country.

The new emission control standards for

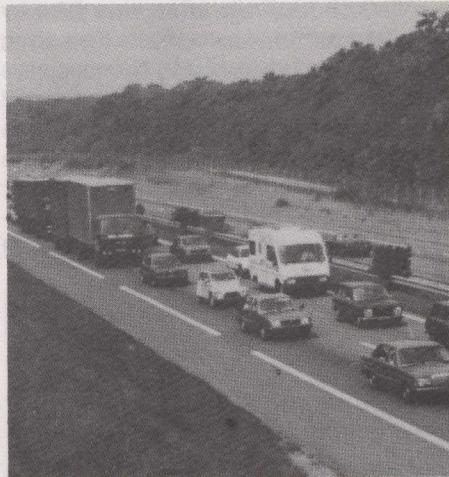
cars and light duty trucks, which will come into effect on September 1, 1987 for the 1988 models, are expected to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions from new cars by 45 per cent by the end of the century. The emission standards, similar to those already in effect in the US, will mean all new cars will have to use unleaded gas.

The new car emission standards, said Mrs. Blais-Grenier, are "as tough as any other national standard and tougher than most" and will significantly reduce the air pollution problem in cities as well as acid rain.

Industry clean-up

The federal government will contribute up to \$150 million to assist the smelting industry reduce pollution through modernization and installation of pollution-control devices. The clean-up program will be a shared responsibility between the smelting industry and the federal and provincial governments.

Some \$25 million federal government assistance has also been earmarked for the development of improved smelting technologies and over \$70 million has been



The new control standards will reduce nitrogen oxide emissions substantially in new cars.



Pollution-control devices will be installed by industry as part of the clean-up program.

budgeted to support technological development for the more efficient use of coal for power generation. The federal government is also committed to maintain the existing program of monitoring the effects of acid rain and scientific investigation at a cost of over \$18 million a year.

In addition, Canada will continue its role in the international community by seeking cooperative agreements on acid rain controls, particularly under the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

In April, Canada will sign an international agreement on automobile emissions with Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland and Austria, and another in Helsinki in July, with members of the Economic Commission for Europe.

An acid rain office to co-ordinate government policy will be set up in Canada. No date has been set for the opening of the agency which will report directly to the environment minister. The parliamentary sub-committee on acid rain will also be re-established.

Vehicle emissions standards

	Current		September 1/87	
	Cars (grams/kilometre)	Light trucks	Cars	Light trucks
Hydrocarbons	1.24	1.24	0.25	0.50
Carbon monoxide	15.50	15.50	2.11	6.21
Nitrogen oxides	1.92	1.92	0.62	1.43
Evaporative emissions	24.00	24.00	2.00	2.00
Diesel particulate emissions	—	—	0.12	0.16