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General Motors to Pay \$146 Million For Excess Emissions

Almost six million vehicles were emitting over 10 percent more carbon dioxide on average than compliance reports said they were

By Will Sullivan

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General Motors (G.M.) faces steep penalties after an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) investigation found that nearly six million of its vehicles were emitting excess carbon dioxide. The company will pay \$145.8 million in penalties and lose 50 million metric tons of greenhouse gas credits.

Automakers have to test vehicles after one and four years on the road to make sure they still meet emissions standards. The EPA found that 5.9 million 2012-2018 model year vehicles were emitting over 10 percent more carbon dioxide on average than G.M.'s compliance reports claimed, according to a statement from the agency.

The vehicles in question are around 4.6 million full-size pickups and SUVs and 1.3 million midsize SUVs. They include different models of Chevrolet, GMC and Cadillac. The EPA says the vehicles will stay on the road and won't be repaired, according to Tom Krisher and Matthew Daly of the Associated Press (AP).

"EPA's vehicle standards depend on strong oversight in order to deliver public health benefits in the real world," EPA administrator Michael S. Regan says in the agency's statement. "Our investigation has achieved accountability and upholds an important program that's reducing air pollution and protecting communities across the country."

The EPA announced in their statement that G.M. would be retiring the 50 million metric tons of greenhouse gas credits. Carbon credits created by projects that capture or reduce emissions enable companies to offset their carbon dioxide emissions, allowing them to freely emit carbon dioxide equal to the amount of credit they have. Reuters' David Shepardson estimates that the credits have a value of about \$300 million.

General Motors will pay the \$146 million penalty to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), part of the Department of Transportation, according to *Environment & Energy News*' Mike Lee. The automaker will also lose 30.6 million gas mileage credits from NHTSA, spokesperson Lucia Sanchez tells the *Washington Post*'s Maxine Joselow in an email.

In March, the EPA finalized national pollution standards for vehicles with model years starting 2027 that are estimated to prevent more than seven billion tons of carbon emissions and provide almost \$100 billion in societal benefits.

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G.M. said in a statement that they admitted to no wrongdoing or noncompliance, according to the *New York Times*' Coral Davenport. “We believe this is the best course of action to swiftly resolve outstanding issues with the federal government regarding this matter. G.M. remains committed to reducing auto emissions and working toward achieving the Administration’s fleet electrification goals,” the statement said, per the publication.

Since G.M. said they will address the excess emissions, the EPA said it doesn't need to formally determine the cause of the excess emissions, according to CBS News' Kate Gibson.

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