

Berlin Environmental Zone: Information for vehicle owners **Exemptions will end in 2015**

The 2011-2017 clean air plan adopted by the Berlin Senate in June 2013 calls for an end to most of the exemptions for the environmental zone in 2015.

The following now applies to the exemptions for the Berlin environmental zone:



1. Exemption for diesel vehicles complying with the Euro 3 exhaust emission standard with no retrofitting option

Diesel vehicles complying with the Euro 3 exhaust emission standard (yellow sticker) for which no particulate filter is available for upgrading to a green sticker may drive within the environmental zone on the basis of an exemption if a certificate confirming that the vehicle cannot be retrofitted is issued by a technical inspection agency.

A general order issued on 20 November 2013 and published in the Berlin official journal on 6 December 2013 has now limited this exemption until **31 December 2014**.

Vehicles that cannot be retrofitted to obtain a green sticker will not be allowed to enter the environmental zone from 1 January 2015. They must then be replaced by suitable vehicles. This also applies when the validity date on the certificate issued proving there is no retrofitting option has not been reached.

2. Exemptions on application

An application for an exemption may be accepted for older vehicles affected by a driving ban in the environmental zone in certain cases of hardship. The local road traffic authorities of the boroughs located in the environmental zone are responsible for this.

These exemptions are restricted with immediate effect and will now end on 31 December 2014. This also applies to all exemptions that were previously extendable. In addition, the deadlines for the maximum duration previously applied continue to apply (please refer to the leaflets concerning the applications for individual exemptions). It should still be noted, for example, that exemptions granted for a case of hardship for commercial transport can only be issued for two years at the most

It is intended to maintain exemptions for a few special vehicles and for vehicles belonging to people suffering from impaired mobility on low incomes. Details will probably be prepared by spring 2014.

Why are the exemptions ending?

Emissions of harmful pollutants have been lowered considerably thanks to the environmental zone. It has meant a reduction of almost 60%, or 173 tonnes, of diesel soot, and 20%, or 1517 tonnes of nitrogen oxides each year. However, there could be even lower levels of pollutants. Exemptions for older vehicles and the exemption for diesel vehicles with no retrofitting option result in the avoidable pollutant emissions of 10 to 20 tonnes of diesel soot and 40 to 100 tonnes of nitrogen oxides per year. In order to achieve the full effect of the environmental zone the Berlin Senate has decided in its 2011-2017 clean air plan to end most exemptions in 2015. This is necessary, as without additional measures aimed at cutting pollutant emissions it will not be possible to comply with the threshold for nitrogen dioxide by 2015. However, because this is prescribed in law, the European Commission has demanded that Berlin take further measures.

You can find more information on the environmental zone at
www.Berlin.de/Umweltzone