



# Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

### Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950-1304

DEQ Tel.: (670) 664-8500/01; Fax: (670) 664-8540

[www.deq.gov.mp](http://www.deq.gov.mp)



## PRESS RELEASE

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announced recent progress in reducing harmful diesel emissions through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) State Grants, a federal funding program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The DERA State Grants support states and U.S. territories in reducing air pollution from older diesel engines and equipment by replacing, upgrading, or retiring outdated vehicles and nonroad equipment with cleaner and more efficient technologies.

The BECQ Clean Air Program (CAP) applies for DERA State Grant funding each year to modernize older diesel engines and equipment across the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). These upgrades reduce fuel consumption and emissions, improve local air quality, and help protect public health—especially in areas where diesel-powered equipment is frequently used.

“Through the EPA’s DERA State Grant program, the Clean Air Program supported the Parks and Recreation Division under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources in replacing an older 2006 Tier 2 Kubota tractor with a newer 2024 Tier 4 John Deere tractor,” said Justin Pangelinan, Clean Air Program Manager. “Tier 4 engines meet much more stringent emissions standards and significantly reduce harmful pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter. Upgrading this equipment helps reduce air pollution, improve public health, and support cleaner air for CNMI residents, particularly in areas where diesel equipment is heavily used. This grant allows us to invest in cleaner technology that goes beyond regulatory requirements to improve air quality in our island communities.”

According to Parks and Recreation Director, Michael Cruz, this new equipment will assist with daily operations at the Marpi Public Cemetery, including opening and closing plot covers, as well as ground maintenance at other public spaces around the island.

The DERA State Grants are a vital resource for the CNMI as local agencies continue transitioning to cleaner energy systems and equipment. These investments reduce harmful pollutants that contribute to respiratory illnesses and environmental degradation while supporting broader efforts to improve public health and environmental resiliency across island communities.

For more information about the EPA’s DERA State Grants, visit the EPA Diesel Emissions Reduction Program webpage. For details about the CNMI Clean Air Program, contact BECQ DEQ at (670) 664-8500 or email [deq.air@becq.gov.mp](mailto:deq.air@becq.gov.mp).



L-R: Mark Tyler Flores, CAP Staff; Michael Cruz, Parks and Recreation Director; Justin Pangelinan, CAP Manager; Gabriel Boyer, Boyer Trading Company, LLC; Floyd R. Masga, BECQ Administrator; Felisa Mendiola, Executive Assistant to the Administrator, BECQ; Shella Ruiz, CAP Staff