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Exhausting research

A new system to reduce pollution from diesel engines has gone on trial in Yorkshire, following research by chemist Dr Trevor Griffiths.

Dr Griffiths explained: "The emissions technology system allows air to bubble through a special mix of platinum, rhodium and rhenium salts before entering the combustion chamber as an aerosol. It's simple to fit even to older vehicles, and could even be adapted for use with coal-fired power stations."

The system's innovation is to bring the action of the standard catalytic converter into the combustion chamber, rather than working with the exhaust components. As well as reducing pollutants, it improves fuel efficiency and increases horsepower.

Dr Griffiths, who formally retired recently, first saw the system in the US, where he discovered the inventors didn't fully know how it worked. The extensive analysis he carried out while at the University helped to define the role of the catalyst ingredients.

Trials are currently taking place on council and police vehicles in North Yorkshire and with the Road Haulage Association.

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