

TUG Tidbits

Newsletter of the Natural Gas Transit (& School Bus) Users Group



Fueling a BJCTA (Birmingham, AL) CNG Bus

June 2008

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Natural Gas Bus “Incidents” – What Can We Learn from Them? July 15 TUG Webcast

TUG is holding a FREE webcast: *Natural Gas Bus “Incidents” – What Can We Learn from Them?* from 1-2 p.m. Eastern Time, on Tuesday July 15. Rob Adams of Marathon Technical Services, will give us the story of a number of bus “incidents,” go over their causes, and talk about lessons learned which can help avoid similar problems in the future.



You should soon be receiving a separate notice about the webcast – but whether you do or not, just dial in to 1-888-790-5897 (use the passcode TUG) for the audio and join the web portion directly at

<https://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join.php?i=PH2298471&p=TUG&t=c> or <https://www.mymeetings.com/nc/join/> using conference number PH2298471 and audience passcode TUG at 1 pm Eastern Time on Tuesday July 15.

FTA Issues Solicitation for Clean Fuel Bus Program

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has announced the availability of \$28.7 million in federal funding for clean fuel bus programs. Natural gas buses (as well as infrastructure improvements to support natural gas buses) qualify for funding under this program. The funding will go to transit agencies that operate clean fuel buses located in emissions non-attainment or maintenance areas. Revenue-producing vehicles other than buses may also be purchased under this program. The full solicitation is available at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-11224.pdf>. The deadline for filing proposals for funding is July 21, 2008. (Source: *Federal Register*)

“Use of Natural Gas Buses on the Rise” says *Metro Magazine*

An extensive article in the May 2008 issue of *Metro Magazine* showcases the environmental and cost-saving benefits of natural gas fuel and the industry's increasing focus on using natural gas. The article also discusses infrastructure construction. Click on http://www.metro-magazine.com/t_featpick.cfm?id=90511548 to read the article.

***Get Money for Using Natural Gas* – Presentations from April 3 TUG Webcast Available**

In case you missed the April 3 TUG (Natural Gas Transit [and school bus] Users Group) webcast, *Getting Money for Using Natural Gas*, the slide presentations are posted at http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/toolbox/webcast_presentations.html, on the Department of Energy's Clean Cities website. Just click on the April 3, 2008 webcast to go to the three presentations.

The webcast included an overview of the federal incentives for NGVs, natural gas fueling stations and natural gas use, presented by Jeff Clarke of NGV America, with an emphasis on how these incentives can help public entities. Also taking part in the webcast were E. Mattie Webster from the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and Annette Filoromo-Beck of the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) located in Pennsylvania. WMATA operates a fleet of 439 natural gas buses. CATA, a much smaller fleet, is 100% natural gas powered. WMATA and CATA explained how they have been able to claim the \$0.50 federal incentive for users of natural gas as a motor fuel.

Price of Diesel Leads Lodi, CA School District to CNG

When the cost of filling up its 75 diesel school buses reached \$4,000 per day in early April, the Lodi, California Unified School District assigned its 27 CNG buses to the longest routes and started using them for field trips to save money. With the price of diesel up from \$2.40/gallon in September to \$3.51 at the end of March, the school system's fuel budget was already used up with two months left in the school year. Lodi pays \$1.70/DGE for natural gas.

As a bonus, Carlos Garcia, Director of Transportation, added that the CNG buses are better for the environment. "A CNG bus is always going to be cleaner," Garcia said. (Source: Lodi, CA *News-Sentinel*)

1990 Decision to Switch to NG Buses Pays Off

In 1990 Sonoma County (CA) Transit, north of San Francisco, decided to switch to CNG buses. The county moved to natural gas because it was better for the environment and there were substantial incentives from the federal government and local air quality management districts. With today's diesel prices, the decision is really paying off in money saved and cleaner air.

Bryan Albee, transit system manager, reported that the agency projected its April cost for natural gas at \$76,082 for its 46 natural-gas-powered buses. The equivalent amount of diesel fuel to power the buses would have cost \$210,400, Albee said. The federal \$0.50/GGE rebate brings an additional \$240,000 to Sonoma County. As an added bonus, Albee reported that their CNG buses have a 1/3 longer lifespan than comparable diesel buses. (Source: Santa Rosa, CA *Press Democrat*)

New Natural Gas Buses in the USA

San Diego's Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) has unveiled its the first natural gas-electric hybrid commercial bus. The CNG hybrid bus will travel all over the MTS network, providing commuters the opportunity to experience the new technology.

The CNG-Hybrid is expected to provide significantly greater fuel economy, reduced NOx and CO₂ emissions, and quieter operation than conventional diesel or even CNG buses.



Grand Canyon National Park purchased 20 new low-floor CNG transit buses as part of the visitor transportation system on the South Rim of the park. According to a park spokesperson, “The replacement of the park’s older diesel buses with CNG powered buses will further enhance the visitor experience by substantially reducing air pollutants and noise levels.” The US Government’s General Services Administration estimates that this bus replacement will result in the reduction of 18.5 tons/year of non-methane hydrocarbons, 176 tons/year of nitrogen oxides and 10 tons/year of diesel particulate matter (or soot). (Source: National Park Service press release)

New York City’s MTA Long Island Bus Company has placed an order for 60 Orion VII Next Generation CNG transit buses. Long Island Bus began replacing its diesel bus fleet with CNG buses in 1992 and is now made up almost entirely of CNG buses. (Source: NGV Global)

The Los Angeles Unified School District, in an effort to protect children’s health and ensure environmental stewardship by adopting the strictest possible emission standards, has received funding from South Coast Air Quality Management District for 40 compressed natural gas buses. The district has the largest compressed natural gas school bus fleet (173 buses) in California.

"We owe it to our children and our community to provide a healthy school environment to and from home. These CNG buses are investments that safeguard our students from breathing toxic diesel exhaust," said Superintendent David L. Brewer III. (Source: LAUSD Press Release)

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority approved the purchase of 260 new high-capacity CNG buses. Delivery of the buses, being manufactured by North American Bus Industries, will be completed by June 30, 2010. The new buses, which have 15 percent more capacity than standard 40-foot buses, will replace the oldest 40-foot diesel and CNG buses in Metro's fleet. Metro now has a fleet of 2,561 active buses, almost all of them fueled with CNG. (Source: NGVAmerica Newsletter)

New Natural Gas Bus Purchases Overseas

Brussels, Belgium is buying 70 “environmentally friendly” natural gas buses to be delivered in 2009. "The number of passengers continues to increase. Hence, we need to add new vehicles into the transport network to ensure sufficient mobility," said a spokesman for the Society of Transport in Brussels. (Source NGV Communications)

Karachi, Pakistan's City District Government has initiated a project to introduce CNG buses by July. The Karachi Mass Transit Cell (KMTC) has called local and foreign firms to be a part of the effort. An earlier promise that 5,000 CNG buses would be introduced to Karachi roads never took off, partly because a number of terrorism-related incidents in the city last year disrupted law and order and dented investor confidence. But now the project has picked up and aims to introduce environment-friendly public transport, although the number has gone down from 5,000 to 2,500. Forty "green routes" covering the whole city, where the first consignment of 500 CNG buses will operate, have been identified. (Source NGV Communications Group)

Manaus, Brazil, capital of Amazonas state, approved a law that new buses for mass transit systems must run on natural gas. This is the first legislation in Brazil which requires companies to buy public transport vehicles powered by gaseous fuel. The mayor, Leonel Feitoza, explained that the measure will begin with the next order of public buses.
(Source GNV Magazine.com)

Please send all questions, comments, requests for information, etc. to Hank Seiff at 703-534-6151 or hseiff@cleanvehicle.org. See the TUG website at <http://www.nrel.gov/vehiclesandfuels/ngvtf/tug.html>