

A Message From the Norwich Clean Cities Coordinator--

Welcome to the premiere edition of the Connecticut Clean Cities Connection, a newsletter distributed by Connecticut Clean Cities. The Norwich Clean Cities was awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Energy to fund the Clean Cities Coordinator position. One of my goals as Coordinator is to publish a quarterly newsletter that ties together the activities of all the Connecticut Clean Cities.

I believe that showcasing the progress made by all of our Connecticut Clean Cities in a single publication will provide a



Peter Polubiato, Norwich Clean Cities Coordinator, U.S. Congressman Rob Simmons, Carol Ewen, CNG bus driver, and Norwich Mayor Arthur Lathrop at the NPU CNG Fueling Station

solid footing to work as a team to engage in more "far reaching" projects that will cover the entire State of Connecticut.

We hope you find this newsletter informative and look forward to sharing more exciting AFV news from Connecticut in the future. We were pleased to have Congressman Rob Simmons visit the Norwich CNG fueling facility and see first hand the progress we've made adding AFV's to the area fleets. He said, "now more than ever we need to be energy independent and I'm pleased to see the progress made in my district and all of Connecticut".

Please feel free to e-mail me at norwichcleancities@npumail.com.

- Peter Polubiato

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The Connecticut Clean Cities Connection is a publication of the Norwich Clean Cities, in cooperation with the Capitol Clean Cities of Connecticut, the Greater New Haven Clean Cities Coalition, Energy Alternatives of Southwestern Connecticut, and the Boston Region of the Department of Energy.

Norwich Children Ride CNG to School

In 1996, Norwich Clean Cities and Norwich Public Schools (NPS) agreed to apply to the USDOE for incremental funds to purchase two alternative fuel school buses, one CNG powered and one battery-electric powered. After a competitive bidding process, Blue Bird Corporation was selected to provide both 72-seat, flat front buses similar to the current fleet of 25 diesel buses being operated by the School District's contractor. Upon receipt of approval of the grant application under the State of Connecticut's State Energy Program (SEP), administered for the USDOE by the State Office of Policy and Management, orders were placed with Blue Bird for the two buses.

The first CNG bus was delivered to Norwich during the spring of 1998 and placed in service at the start of the '98-'99 school year. An extensive educational program was conducted for students, teachers and parents prior to placing the new bus in service. This was to familiarize all with the operational and safety features and environmental benefits to both children and general public. Because of component supplier problems, Blue Bird had to put their electric school bus program on hold, hence, the grant was modified to include a second CNG bus. This bus was delivered to NPS in mid-1999 and added to the operator's fleet for use in the '99-'00 school year. Both buses became very popular with students and drivers alike who appreciated the absence of diesel exhaust fumes and their smooth, quiet operation. Carol Ewen, one of the first CNG bus drivers and who continues to drive a CNG bus today, says "This is my fourth school year driving a CNG bus and some of the extras I enjoy are the quick and easy morning start-ups, no matter how cold it gets (this winter has been a real test of that!) Also, the smooth and quiet ride...it's so quiet I can hear what the kids are saying in the last seat in the back. I also love the low seats as I can see what all my children, big and small, are doing - making for better passenger management. Needless to say, I'm a fan of the clean machine and hope to be driving them for many more years."



Because of the favorable experience with the first two CNG

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Old Man Winter's No Match for E-Trolley

by Lee Grannis, Coordinator - Greater New Haven Clean Cities Coalition, Inc.

The "perfect storm" that blanketed the Northeast on Presidents' Day couldn't keep the five electric trolley buses out of service in New Haven, Connecticut. The buses performed well thanks not only to their "flooded" nickel-cadmium batteries that lost only about 5% of their power during the extreme weather conditions, but also to the trolleys' dedicated drivers.

"The buses have performed reliably and nobody's been left stranded," said Lee Grannis, the Clean Cities Coordinator in New Haven. "The drivers like the trolleys too, and feel safe and secure driving them." Grannis also reported that the buses drive in the snow better than the para-transit buses. The only problem so far has been to keep the drivers warm on the occasional 10 to 15 degree days. The Greater New Haven Transit District (GNHTD) has re-routed the trolleys' heating ducts, protected the wiring with insulation and changed the hoses to get more warm air circulating. In cooperation with Ebus, the manufacturer, GNHTD has successfully provided a cold weather test bed for these vehicles.

Members of the New Haven Trolley Committee are working together to suggest better downtown routes for the trolleys. MBA students at nearby Yale University are beginning a survey project

to collect route data.

Only one nickel cadmium battery failed during the trolley start-up phase. Since then, the batteries have performed without problems. "The trolleys operate 50 to 60 miles a day with power to spare," Grannis said. "They run from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., six days a week and we estimate the operation to total 10,000 to 11,000 miles per year using six charge cycles a week."

For more information on the New Haven E-trolleys, contact Lee Grannis at lgrannis@snet.net.



Neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night....

Connecticut Alternative Fuel Vehicle Program Puts Clean Vehicles on the Road

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CONNDOT) offers the Connecticut Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) Program that funds the differential cost of vehicles powered by natural gas, electricity, propane and hybrid technologies. The program is part of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program that is financed by the Federal Highway Administration. According to Program Manager Brian Chapman, the incremental cost of 171 AFV's, for a total of \$2.2 Million, has been awarded to municipalities and other public transportation entities since the program's inception eight years ago.

Table 1 shows the number of program vehicles that have already been placed into service and the amount of incremental funds that the program has provided for the purchase of these vehicles.

CONNDOT has awarded an additional \$200,707 for the incremental cost of 41 vehicles. Once the operators purchase these vehicles, the number of vehicles in the program will increase to 212 for a total incremental cost of \$2.4 Million.

CONNDOT has drastically cut the amount of paperwork necessary to apply for awards and to track vehicle performance. For

example, the grant application only requires a 1-page application; just fill in the blanks and add the dealer quote to verify the incremental cost. It's painless and a grant writer is not required! According to Brian, CONNDOT wants to make it as easy as possible to apply and only requires that operators provide feedback information to understand our Connecticut experiences with AFVs, their benefits and problems.

For more information, please contact Brian Chapman at brian.chapman@po.state.ct.us.

Table 1. AFVs Funding and Numbers Placed in Service

Period	Amount Spent on AFVs	Number of AFVs
1995-1996	\$899,644	16
1996-1997	\$192,810	14
1997-1998	\$350,623	47
1998-1999	\$251,160	26
1999-2000	\$345,427	39
2000-2001	\$18,955	3
2001-2002	\$123,500	26
Totals	\$2,182,119	171

Source: Connecticut Dept. of Transportation Alt. Fuel Program

buses, in 2001 NPS decided to purchase a third CNG bus through the Clean Cities Incremental Grant Program. The Blue Bird 84-seat All-American CNG bus was selected. This bus was powered by the same engine as the other two, the John Deere, 8.1 liter CNG engine, simplifying maintenance (which has been minimal to date.) The third bus was placed in service for the '00-'01 school year. All three buses are currently being operated by the contractor, First Student.

In addition to being operated in the daily transportation of students to school, the CNG buses are routinely selected for special activities after normal hours and on weekends. They have also been demonstrated at Clean Cities Advance the Choice events and at various school conferences. One of the Norwich CNG buses will participate in the Environmental Justice Event in Hartford on October 24, 2003.

It has been calculated that the three CNG buses have eliminated the use of 24,000 gallons of diesel fuel and have reduced harmful emissions by 80 to 95% over their diesel-powered counterparts since being placed in operation.

Maureen Picard, Assistant to the Superintendent of Norwich Public Schools comments: "We are proud to be the first school system in Connecticut to procure and operate CNG buses. They have operated safely and smoothly and their integration with the diesel fleet has been uneventful. The benefits to a cleaner environment for our children and the public has been extremely important"

MEMO

To: The Connecticut Clean Cities Coalitions
From: Michael Scarpino,
Boston Regional Support Office

Awareness of the Clean Cities Program and its impact on energy independence and clean air starts with good communications. Congratulations and good luck to Peter Polubiatko, Coordinator of the Norwich Clean Cities and to all of the Connecticut Clean Cities on the occasion of the first issue of their Connecticut Clean Cities Connection newsletter. The newsletter is appropriately named as it provides the connectivity for the four Clean Cities, illustrate their accomplishments and voice their concerns.

With the current events unfolding in the Middle East, it's imperative that the nation learns more about the benefits of clean burning, domestically produced alternative fuels, which are used in hundreds of thousands of vehicles every day. By helping to increase the number of alternative fuel vehicles on the road, the Connecticut Clean Cities Coalitions are assisting in lessening our nation's dependence on foreign oil, and cleaning the air that we all breathe.

(Look for Mike's interview about CT Clean Cities and AFV use in the state, airing on Part 3 of the documentary series, "Connecticut's Energy Future", April 24th at 9 P.M. on CPTV.)

City of Hartford Purchases 20 New Honda CNG GX Civics

The City of Hartford, with the help of Capitol Clean Cities, purchased Alternative Fueled Vehicles for the first time. Hartford's new 20 CNG Honda GXs join other Hartford-area AFV owners and operators, including Yellow Cab, United Parcel Service, the U.S.

Postal Service, and the State Capitol Police.

The Hartford Court of Common Council cited health statistics in a Resolution adopted on April 8, 2002, authorizing the City administration to apply for funding and initiating the



Keith Mohammad, Equipment Superintendent, City of Hartford, Department of Public Works

requisite contracts for the purchase of alternative fuel vehicles beginning July 1, 2002. The health statistics indicated that Hartford children, ages newborn to fourteen, are three times as likely to be hospitalized for asthma, compared to other Connecticut children; and 15% of Hartford adults report having doctor diagnosed asthma.

The incremental cost of the vehicles was awarded to the City as a CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) grant in the amount of \$106,000. The Mayor of Hartford, Eddie A. Perez, was quoted in the Hartford Current stating that "the city plans to eventually buy 140 natural gas vehicles."

Keith Chapman, City Hall Consultant and former Newington Town Manager said of the CNG Honda, "it's the cleanest burning combustion engine in the world."

Craig J. Peters, an executive at Manchester Honda (a stakeholder in the Capitol Clean Cities), worked closely with Hartford and the Department of Transportation to bring the deal together.

The introduction of CNG-powered vehicles in one of several steps being taken as part of an organization-wide effort to improve the environment and raise the quality of life for all who live, work and play in Hartford.

For more information on the CMAQ Grant, please see the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Program article on page 2 .

Projects in the "Pipeline"

Look for these stories in upcoming issues:

- ◆ **Norwich Public Utilities gets ready to accept delivery of two dedicated-CNG heavy duty AFV's - an Electric Utility Bucket Truck and a Wastewater Division Vacuum Truck.**
 - ◆ **Connecticut Natural Gas upgrades Texaco CNG fueling station in Hartford.**
- And mark your calendar for the National Clean Cities Conference, May 18-21, 2003*



***SAFE & HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENTS IN
CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS
CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 24, 2003***

Clean Cities of Connecticut and the Connecticut Education Association, in conjunction with the American Lung Association, Connecticut Department of Health, and the Connecticut DEP will sponsor a conference on Safe and Healthy Environments in Connecticut Schools. The conference, originally scheduled for April 5th, will now be held on October 24, 2003 at the Hastings Conference Center, Hartford, CT. A morning plenary session (7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.) and various breakout sessions (10:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.) will address various environmental topics relevant to superintendents, boards of education, members, principals, teachers, parents, school nurses, "Tools for Schools" committees, legislators, school architects, building and grounds personnel, and local health departments. In the afternoon, the four Clean Cities of Connecticut will facilitate two breakout sessions focused on transportation and air quality. During these sessions, participants will learn what school districts can do to shift Connecticut's 6000 diesel-powered school buses to cleaner alternatives. One of the three Norwich Public Schools' CNG school buses will be available for inspection and demonstration. Included in the afternoon sessions will be discussions on available alternative fuel vehicles for carrying school children, experiences from those already in service in the State, and what funding is available from state and federal governments to make the transition to cleaner fuels cost effective. For more information about the conference, contact Juliet Burdelski at burdelski@informinc.org. To register for the conference, go to <http://www.cca.org/WhatsNew/index.html>.



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