



Green Fleet News

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Renee Cipriano, Director

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Add a few more stars!!

Congratulations to the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County for being the first fleet in the Illinois Green Fleets Program to be upgraded from a 3-Star to a 5-Star Illinois Green Fleet! This forest preserve is well underway with its mission to change over its entire 162 vehicle fleet to operate with natural gas, propane, E-85, and biodiesel. This 5-Star Green Fleet continues to receive much media attention within the State and nationally. See their updated fleet profile on our website at

illinoisgreenfleets.org.

Note: Due to significant activity in the Illinois Green Fleets Program, the Spring and Summer 2003 editions of this newsletter were not published.

Inside this issue:

<i>Dennis Weaver and Caravan Ride into Illinois</i>	2
<i>Alternate Fuels Rebate Program Continues</i>	2
<i>Illinois Clean School Bus Program is Launched</i>	3
<i>State's Biggest E-85 Fan Receives Citizen Award</i>	3
<i>Truck and Bus Conference Draws Large</i>	3
<i>Biodiesel Sneaks up on Highland Park</i>	4

Illinois Green Fleets are Adding Up, 15 New Members Brings Total to 40

The Illinois EPA welcomes the addition of 15 new green fleets to the Illinois Green Fleets Program. These organizations were recognized on June 9 at an awards ceremony at the Le Meridien Hotel in Chicago. Several of these fleets have been implementing clean fuels and vehicles for several months or years, and have achieved the status of a designated "green fleet." Below is a brief summary of each new green fleet.

Chicago Dept. of Aviation: 32 natural gas vehicles operating at O'Hare Airport.

Chicago Dept. of Fleet Management: 31 natural gas and 80 E-85 vehicles to date with several more on order.

Commonwealth Edison: 4 propane vehicles, 3 E-85 vehicles, and 20 trucks and several off-road equipment units that run on 20 percent biodiesel.

City of Darien: 47 trucks that run on 20 percent biodiesel; shares its biodiesel fuel with three local school districts and two area fire departments.

City of Evanston, Northwestern Univ., and Village of Skokie: Evanston hosts the natural gas site for all three fleets and has 1 E-85 and 2 propane vehicles, and uses 20 percent biodiesel in 175 trucks; Northwestern has 4 natural gas and 11 E-85 vehicles; Skokie has 7 natural gas vehicles and 50 trucks that run on 20 percent biodiesel.

City of Highland Park: Uses 20 percent biodiesel in 35 trucks, including fire trucks, ambulances; shares fuel with school districts and mass transit agency.

- Chicago Dept. of Aviation (1-Star)*
- Chicago Dept. of Fleet Management (1-Star)*
- Commonwealth Edison (3-Star)*
- City of Darien (1-Star)*
- City of Evanston (3-Star)*
- City of Highland Park (1-Star)*
- Forest Preserve District of Will County (1-Star)*
- Globe Ground North America (1-Star)*
- Navy Public Works Center (5-Star)*
- Northwestern University (3-Star)*
- Village of Homewood (1-Star)*
- Village of Lake in the Hills (1-Star)*
- Village of Lake Zurich (3-Star)*
- Village of Skokie (3-Star)*
- Village of Winnetka (1-Star)*

Forest Preserve District of Will County: 8 E-85 vehicles and 10 trucks that use 20 percent biodiesel.

Ground Globe North America: 10 natural gas-powered buses operating at O'Hare Airport.

Navy Public Works Center: 118 E-85 and 37 natural gas vehicles.

Village of Homewood: 3 natural gas vehicles.

Village of Lake in the Hills: 5 E-85 vehicles and installed E-85 fuel pump.

Village of Lake Zurich: 4 natural gas vehicles, 21 trucks that use 20 percent biodiesel, and allows employees to refuel their personal vehicles with natural gas.

Village of Winnetka: 41 trucks that operate with 20 percent biodiesel; exploring use of natural gas and E-85 in the near future.

Dennis Weaver's Caravan Rides into Illinois Highlighting Electric-Hybrids, Hydrogen, Biodiesel, and E-85

Veteran actor Dennis Weaver has had to deal with many different modes of transportation during his career. Whether it be riding a horse on *Gunsmoke* or zipping around the Florida Everglades in an airboat (with his pet bear) on *Gentle Ben*, Mr. Weaver has learned how to get around in some unique places. On May 9, Dennis Weaver drove through Illinois in something a little more conventional: a red-white-and-blue Toyota Prius, a gasoline-electric hybrid car, to promote clean, domestic fuels and environmentally friendly vehicles.



Billed as the "Drive to Survive" caravan that traveled from L.A. to Washington, D.C. during a two-week stretch in early May, Dennis and his colleagues at the Institute of Economics in Colorado promoted several types of American

fuels. The caravan featured the first cross-country voyage of a vehicle powered solely by hydrogen. Other vehicles in the caravan included a truck that ran on pure biodiesel fuel along with other gasoline-electric hybrid vehicles.

During his trip from St. Louis to Chicago on May 9, staff of the Illinois EPA and members of the Chicago Area Clean Cities coalition hosted Mr. Weaver and his "Drive to Survive" teammates. With an escort from the Illinois State Police just south of Springfield, Dennis and his caravan made their way to the Governor's mansion in the heart of the capital city. Illinois EPA Director Renee Cipriano and State Representatives Phil Novak and Kurt Granberg welcomed Mr. Weaver to Springfield. Several media, including television, radio and newspapers,

covered the story. As part of the occasion, Director Cipriano designated Dennis Weaver's Drive to Survive caravan as an "Honorary Illinois Green Fleet." From Springfield, members of the Chicago Area Clean Cities



(CACC) coalition joined the caravan in adding several E-85 and natural gas-powered vehicles. The "Drive" from Springfield to Chicago, following Interstate 55 and parts of Historic Route 66, had two

themes that were highlighted on the vehicles: "**Drive to Survive on I-55**" and "**Get Your Clean Fuel Kicks on Route 66.**"

Along the way, the caravan pulled in at Becker's BP in Dwight where more media were waiting. Dennis filled up a Chevrolet Tahoe with E-85. Becker's BP is the newest E-85 station in Illinois.



Dennis Weaver fills up with E-85 with some help from CACC member John Van Pelt at Becker's BP in Dwight.

As the caravan made its way into the Windy City at 5:00 p.m. Friday, the Chicago traffic provided a new meaning to Dennis' "Drive to Survive" message. That evening, the Chicago Area Clean Cities coalition hosted a dinner at Harry Caray's restaurant.

Illinois Alternate Fuels Rebate Program Continues

Governor Rod Blagojevich and the Illinois General Assembly supported the continued funding of the Illinois EPA's Alternate Fuels Rebate Program in the state budget passed last May. With previous amendments, the effective dates of the program were extended, but funding for the program was an issue. With this latest action taken by the Governor and the General Assembly, the program continues indefinitely and funding has been restored.

To date, the Illinois EPA has issued nearly \$2 million to 110 applicants throughout the State.



Rebates issued in the program cover 80 percent of the incremental cost of an AFV or the conversion of a vehicle to an AFV, up to \$4,000 per vehicle. In addition,

any vehicle that frequently runs on E-85 is eligible for a fuel rebate up to \$1,350 during a three year period. For more information, call (217) 524-4947.

Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois EPA Launch the Illinois Clean School Bus Program in Chatham

As part of Children's Health Month in October, Gov. Rod Blagojevich and Illinois EPA Director Renee Cipriano announced a new program, the Illinois Clean School Bus Program, to reduce emissions from diesel-powered school buses. The program assists school districts in Illinois in replacing existing buses with cleaner models, retrofitting existing buses with oxidation catalysts or particulate filters, and using clean fuels such as biodiesel, ultra-low sulfur diesel, propane, and natural gas. The program, which will also focus on eliminating unnecessary school bus idling, will improve air quality in and around school buses, the school buildings, and throughout local communities.

"The Illinois Clean School Bus Program will allow us to further our commitment to protecting the environment and the citizens, particularly the children, of Illinois," said Director Cipriano.



The Illinois Clean School Bus Program was launched in Chatham, Illinois on October 30. The Ball-Chatham School District, located south of Springfield, is planning to retrofit 24 of its buses with catalysts and use 20

percent biodiesel fuel in the entire 54-bus fleet. "We couldn't be more pleased to participate in the Illinois Clean School Bus Program," said Dr. Richard Voltz, Superintendent of the district. "Having our buses run with what will be a 40 percent reduction in potentially harmful exhaust emissions certainly fits into our student safety priorities."

A second press conference was held at Prairieland Elementary School in Normal, Illinois to recognize the McLean County School District as the first participant in the program. The McLean County School District has already installed catalysts and is using 20 percent biodiesel fuel in its buses. For more information on the Clean School Bus Program, please call (217) 524-4947.

State's Biggest E-85 Fan Receives Citizen Recognition Award

Nancy Wise of Skokie is not just your average driver. She is a major proponent of E-85 and uses it all the time in her 2001 Dodge Grand Caravan. She fills up at the Clark station located at 2401 Dempster Avenue in Evanston. For her commitment and support for E-85, she was recognized by Chicago Area Clean Cities and the Chicago E-85 Program by being presented the "Outstanding Citizen Support" award at a recognition event for "Illinois Green Fleets" last June.

Ms. Wise has been using E-85 since the summer of 2000

when she acquired her minivan. "I've been very pleased," Wise said. "I believe that we absolutely need to have energy independence. We should be supporting our own economy and not be dependent on foreign oil." She asks the question, "Wouldn't you rather support our farmers? It's not at all inconvenient...and it is good for the ecology, the economy, and the country." In addition, the price of E-85 at this station is often less than the price of regular gasoline.

For the list of E-85 stations in Illinois, visit our website.

Trucks and Buses in the 21st Century Environment Conference Draws Large Crowd, Media Interest

On April 14 and 15, 2003, the Illinois EPA, Chicago Area Clean Cities, the Illinois Soybean Association and other sponsors hosted a conference in Lisle, Illinois which drew over 200 attendees. The two-day conference highlighted various options to reduce emissions from trucks and buses, including oxidation catalysts, particulate filters, technological advances with diesel engines, the use of biodiesel, natural gas, propane, ultra-low sulfur diesel, and other options. An outdoor vehicle exhibit as well as an indoor vendor area allowed attendees to see the vehicles and the after-market

equipment available to reduce truck and bus emissions.

Several fleet managers that have already implemented these measures were on-hand to present their experiences and information on how it benefited their fleets. WGN television and radio as well as several suburban newspapers covered the conference. As a result of this event, a handful of Chicago area fleets have already implemented some of these options to reduce their bus and truck emissions. Some of the conference presentations can be viewed on the Illinois Green Fleets website.

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*“Green Environment, Green
Energy, and Green Economics
for a Green Illinois”*

www.illinoisgreenfleets.org

Green Fleet Feature: Biodiesel Sneaks Up on Highland Park, and the Results are Immeasurable

Joe Guill, Public Works Superintendent of Highland Park, is normally a pretty straight shooter, but he pulled a fast one on his employees last year. Beginning in January 2002, Mr. Guill switched from regular diesel to 20 percent biodiesel (B20) for use in the City's 35 diesel-powered vehicles. At the same time, the North Shore School District started to use B20 in all of its school buses, the local fire department began using it in its fire trucks, and the PACE transit buses serving the area also filled up with B20. But it was a big secret, known by only a few.

Mr. Guill chose to start the project during a cold month because diesel fuels can gel when temperatures drop too low. He felt that if there were going to be any problems, they would occur in the cold winter months. For several months, drivers were not told of the B20 being used in their vehicles to eliminate any biases related to vehicle performance. Mr. Guill didn't hear any complaints or reports of unusual vehicle performance from the drivers, with the exception of a few who inquired whether their vehicles had been tuned up due to noticeable improvements in the emissions. In June of 2002, everyone was told about the fuel switch to B20.

With the employees noticing the emissions difference, Highland Park decided to measure the actual emissions reductions in its vehicles. With the assistance of an emissions testing firm, the fleet was given a diesel smoke opacity test. In the Chicago area, diesel trucks must have their emissions tested annually. The opacity limit for the diesel smoke is 55 percent to stay in compliance with State standards. Highland Park had 20 vehicles that were of most concern in passing the test. Some of these vehicles were 13 years old and had half a million miles on them, making them candidates to exceed the 55 percent standard. To the surprise of the testing firm and to Highland Park, the readings of these vehicles ranged from 2.9 to 13.4 percent, well below the standard for compliance and unheard of for vehicles this age.

“We were surprised,” said Joe Guill. “They [the engineers of the testing firm] were amazed at how clean our emissions were. It definitely was the biodiesel.” Highland Park also uses B20 in 21 pieces of off-road equipment. In total, the City uses over 110,000 gallons of B20 each year. Visit www.illinoisgreenfleets.org to read about other biodiesel fleets.