

FWTA's Compressed Natural Gas Fleet



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FWTA'S COMMITMENT TO CNG

FWTA is committed to the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) to help improve air quality in the region and believes it is a worthwhile investment that is also cost competitive with diesel.

FWTA was among the first U.S. transit agencies in the late 1980s to commit to the conversion of its bus fleet to compressed natural gas. Since 1990, FWTA's use of compressed natural gas has resulted in an estimated reduction of more than 1,500 tons of nitrous oxide and 12 tons of particulate matter compared to using diesel fuel.

Background

FWTA began its conversion to CNG in 1989 with three flexible coaches powered by a Cummins L-10 engine and three vans. As the older fleets became eligible for replacement, they were replaced with vehicles powered by CNG. Subsequent replacement fleets were purchased in 1992, 1994 and 1995 and 2000. Additional buses to meet ridership growth were added in 2004 and 2006. In May 2008, FWTA took delivery of its first CNG suburban/commuter-style buses that have become its prototype for future new long-haul express buses.

Today

FWTA operates a total CNG fleet of nearly 200 buses, vans, trolleys and some utility vehicles. It also expanded its use of compressed natural gas beyond its bus operations fleet by adding CNG hybrids to replace several retiring gasoline-fueled supervisor cars and vans.

FWTA is committed to continued use of CNG because it is beneficial to FWTA's operation, employees and riders because of the low emissions and clean operational qualities. Natural gas is abundant in Texas, so it is good for the local economy, and it also helps to reduce foreign oil foreign imports when it can be used instead of petroleum.

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FWTA initiated the launch of a national transit natural gas coalition in 2009 to assist public transportation agencies interested in converting to natural gas, and as an information exchange for other transit users, manufacturers and vendors. The Natural Gas Vehicles of America (NGVA) continues that program today.

Operations

FWTA has operated more than 100 million miles on compressed natural gas since it began phasing in its CNG fleet. FWTA operates its own compressor system. Its first compressor station, consisting of one compressor was built in 1990. Today, it has five compressors and eight CNG fuel dispensers. FWTA's CNG fuel operation is cost competitive with diesel. The cost for the CNG fuel is less per gallon equivalent than for diesel but the capital costs for the compressors and other maintenance offsets the savings. FWTA also uses long-term contracts and federal grants to help reduce its CNG fuel cost.

801 Cherry Street, Suite 850, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-6857