

Diesel Test Fine Distorts City's Clean Air Efforts

By Ken Nerland, General Services Director, City of Fresno

The City of Fresno was recently in the news as the result of a \$49,000 fine, imposed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), for technical violations of the agency's diesel emission test requirements. While this news item may have given the impression to some that the City was acting negligently in its responsibility to reduce fleet emissions, nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, the City of Fresno has been a champion in the development of a clean air municipal fleet for many years. Our commitment to clean air is demonstrated by the fact that the City operates one of the largest clean air fleets in California utilizing a mix of hybrid, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) alternative fuel and low emission vehicles. The widespread use of these alternative fuel vehicles is making a significant contribution to improving air quality in our region every day.

The fine levied by CARB was related to testing of the City's diesel fleet. In 2004, the City began outfitting its diesel trucks with exhaust after-treatment filters which actually reduced emissions below levels required by CARB's rules. The devices filter soot from the exhaust of diesel engines, reducing particulate matter by about 90% and ozone emissions by 20%. Since the City was achieving greater diesel emission reductions than the tests were designed to measure, our fleet was clearly meeting CARB's requirements.

Regardless, the diesel trucks in question were tested immediately after CARB's requirements were clarified, which confirmed that emissions were merely one-tenth of the level allowed under the State's mandates.

Currently 85 of the City's 164 heavy duty on-road diesel trucks are equipped with exhaust after-treatment filters. About 80% of the diesel fleet is scheduled to be retrofitted by mid 2010. And, the City is proud of the fact that we fully equipped our refuse truck fleet with these filters 5 years ahead of a state mandate.

The City has done much, much more to expand its clean air fleet as well. Far exceeding State low emission requirements, the City is working to replace its diesel refuse truck and transit bus fleet with clean burning natural gas vehicles. Currently 109 of the City's 143 refuse trucks are running on low emission Liquid Natural Gas (LNG). By the end of 2010, the entire fleet of refuse trucks will operate with this clean burning fuel. Presently three of the City's street sweepers utilize Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), with the entire fleet of 13 sweepers to be converted by the end of 2010. Currently 58 of the City's 124 transit buses are CNG powered or hybrids, with the balance equipped with after exhaust filters. The City is in the process of replacing its remaining diesel transit bus fleet with natural gas units similar to the refuse trucks.

City of Fresno Clean Air Vehicle List

Fleet Management	
Type / description	Aug-09
CNG Light Equipment	9
CNG/Unleaded Flex Light Equipment	4
CNG street sweepers (PM10 compliant)	3
CNG Heavy Equipment	1
LNG refuse trucks	111
LPG equipment	6
Electric vehicles	37
Hybrid Light Equipment	63
Plug-in CNG/Electric Hybrid Refuse Truck	1
Diesel refuse trucks with Exhaust Aftertreatment (PM Rule Compliant)	25
Diesel street sweepers with Exhaust Aftertreatment (PM10 Compliant)	9
Other heavy duty diesels with Exhaust Aftertreatment	79
Off road equipment with exhaust aftertreatment	10
Total, Fleet Management	358

FAX	
Type / description	Aug-09
CNG Transit Buses	50
CNG Handi-Ride Buses	2
CNG Trolleys	4
Transit Buses with Exhaust Aftertreatment (PM Rule Compliant)	60
Diesel-Electric Hybrid Transit Buses	0
Gas-Electric Hybrid Transit Buses	5
Total, FAX	121

Total, City of Fresno	479
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