



For Immediate Release

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[August 10, 2010]—While most of us think of getting the kids ready for back to school as getting all the school supplies checked off of the list, right now, the Middle Country Central School District located in Centereach, Long Island is getting more than just this year's students ready for the school year ahead.

The Middle Country Central School District recently awarded a contract to Clean Vehicle Solutions partnered with Empire Coachworks to upfit (or convert) 9 of the district's 60-passenger school buses to natural gas to provide cleaner air for not only this year's incoming students, but students in the following years.

Since Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) burns 30 percent cleaner — and quieter — than diesel, conversion cost can amount to less expenditures than having to modify existing vehicle emissions. In fact, most expenses of upfitting are recouped within 7 years of installation. This savings is in addition to the up-front savings of the cost of fuel, as natural gas is much less volatile than the market surrounding diesel gasolines. More and more university and school districts are taking advantage of not only the green aspect of upfitting their vehicles, but reaping the benefits of cost savings in maintenance and fuel surcharges.

What Is the Upfitting Process and How It's Done

The upfitting process entails a specialized conversion process with adding compressed natural gas - or CNG – systems by certified technicians to existing vehicles. School districts who are interested in upfitting their bus fleets can do so with brand-new vehicles, or with vehicles that have already been in service for some time. Companies that perform CNG systems upfittings must be certified to do so; if inexperienced or unqualified companies handle the upfitting process, damage and other serious problems can occur. Alternative fuel engine conversion systems fall under the jurisdiction of the EPA, who has strict rules and protocols concerning the installation and use of CNG systems. Therefore, the upfitting process must be performed by a certified and experienced servicer.

The Benefits of a CNG System

There are several prime benefits to using compressed natural gas in lieu of traditional gasoline or diesel. Lower fuel and maintenance costs are two things that definitely appeal to school district budget watchers; several available tax credits also sweeten the deal. It burns much cleaner than gasoline or diesel, producing 20% to 30% less carbon emissions than traditional systems. Vehicles aren't generally designed with CNG systems, though, which is why upfitting becomes necessary.

All nine buses are expected to be completely upfitted by the end of 2010.

Along with cleaner air, Middle Country Central School District students have years ahead of noise reduction along with less maintenance costs. You don't need to know too much algebra to know that this equation results in bigger picture benefits for school districts wanting to improve their bottom line as well as their carbon footprint.

About Clean Vehicle Solutions/Empire Coachworks

The mission of Clean Vehicle Solutions is to reduce the environmental impact and cost of ground transportation through the delivery of best-of-breed alternatively fueled vehicles, leading technology and ongoing oversight.

Clean Vehicle Solutions, partnered with Empire Coachworks, provide comprehensive green transportation solutions to corporate, municipal and institutional end-users to significantly reduce the adverse environmental effects of the ground transportation industry.

To learn more about Clean Vehicle Solutions/Empire Coachworks, please visit www.cleanvehiclesolutions.com