



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S LESSON LEARNED:

Reduced emissions and cost savings come from propane-fueled school buses

AT A GLANCE

Industry

School buses

Organization

Los Angeles Unified School District

Challenge & Solution

Reduce emissions and overall operating costs through addition of 90 Blue Bird Propane-Powered Vision buses

Benefits of Propane

- Potential 80 percent reduction in smog-forming emissions.
- Compliance with California's new air quality requirements.
- Potential 30 percent savings in fuel costs.
- Increased safety, as propane fuel tanks are 20 times more puncture-resistant than typical gasoline or diesel tanks, and propane has the lowest flammability range of all alternative motor fuels.



School districts have always required safe, cost-efficient buses to transport children, but now they also prefer environmentally friendly options.

The largest school district in California, the Los Angeles Unified School District, met these requirements by using propane-fueled buses. The district added 90 Blue Bird Propane-Powered Vision buses to its fleet of 1,400 in December 2009 and has already seen significant environmental and safety advantages and anticipates fiscal savings, as well.

Benefits of converting to propane-fueled school buses

The Los Angeles Unified School District carries nearly 53,000 children every day and travels almost 15 million miles in an average school year. In an attempt to make operations cleaner and greener by reducing emissions, the district researched different fleet options to meet the increasing air quality regulations in the state. The district investigated propane as an alternative fuel. Using propane-fueled school buses from Blue Bird proved a competitive alternative to using buses that run on diesel or compressed natural gas, and they met California's new air quality requirements. Specifically in heavy-duty applications like school buses, propane reduces smog-forming emissions by up to 80 percent when compared with diesel engines. And a propane bus can be refueled in minutes.

The district purchased the Blue Bird buses with General Motors 8.1-liter with CleanFuel USA's liquid propane injection system from A-Z Bus in Riverside, Calif., through a clean school bus grant from the Southern California Air Quality Management District. CleanFuel USA established the refueling infrastructure, and Delta Liquid Energy supplies the propane fuel.



In addition to emission reduction, the safety of the riders played a critical role for the decision to add these buses to the fleet. Propane offers the lowest flammability range of all alternative motor fuels. The tanks are 20 times more puncture-resistant than typical gasoline and diesel tanks — an especially important statistic when transporting children. In addition to the safety benefits, propane's reduced emissions are important to the health of passengers on-board.

The Los Angeles Unified School District anticipates significant cost savings to complement the environmental and safety benefits of the propane-fueled school buses. Typically, propane fuel costs about 30 percent less than diesel yet still provides similar fuel economy. Another important financial benefit came from the district's refueling infrastructure. Installing the propane refueling structure costs about one-third less than a diesel structure because of the aboveground tank installation.

Planning for the future

The propane-fueled buses have already delivered propane's safety benefits, lower cost, and significant environmental benefits. As a result, community response has been extremely positive.

In addition, increasing the district's propane-fueled fleet will maximize the initial infrastructure investment and lower overall operating costs. As grants for propane-fueled buses become available, the Los Angeles Unified School District expects to add more buses to its fleet to continue satisfying budgetary, environmental, and safety requirements to transport its riders.

The Propane Education & Research Council was authorized by the U.S. Congress with the passage of Public Law 104-284, the Propane Education and Research Act (PERA), signed into law on October 11, 1996. The mission of the Propane Education & Research Council is to promote the safe, efficient use of odorized propane gas as a preferred energy source.



Customer inquiries:

Ingrid Bechard, Programs Manager
Propane Education
& Research Council
ingrid.bechard@propane.com
202-452-8975

Media inquiries:

Audra Jacobs, Public Relations
Team Leader
Bader Rutter & Associates
ajacobs@bader-rutter.com
262-938-5468