

Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities Gazette

Driving the way toward energy independence

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Dedicated propane fueled flatbed truck displayed by the PA Turnpike Commission at the Western PA Public Works Assoc. Equipment and Vendor Show



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PRCC attends Western Pennsylvania American Public Works Association Event

On June 2 the Western PA Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) held its annual Equipment and Vendor Show at Blueberry Hill Park in Franklin Park Borough. The APWA Show traditionally features 20 - 30 vendors and equipment displays and demonstrations and attracts over 250 attendees. PRCC was invited to bring a number of alternative fueled vehicles to the event. The alternative fueled vehicles drew the attention of many of the attendees who asked about gas mileage, fuel costs, refueling stations, and conversions.

At PRCC'S request, two propane vehicles were brought to the event— a dedicated flatbed truck from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and a dual fuel conversion LPG/Gasoline Grand Marquee from Alliance Auto-Gas. PRCC was also able to bring three CNG vehicles, a CNG Honda Civic and a light Dump Truck (with the retrofit kit

installed by Zoresco) owned by Equitable Gas, as well as a dual fuel conversion Tundra from Port Vue Plumbing. George Totoolos also brought his Chevy Volt, which always draws a lot of attention.

"The day long event convinced a number of township managers and public works directors to start looking at ways to reduce their costs by using alternative fueled vehicles," said Rick Price, Executive Director of PRCC. "We are certainly interested in supporting them throughout the conversion process."



Port Vue Plumbing Has Compressed Natural Gas!

Rich Perkoski not only talks the talk, he walks the walk. Rich was looking for a way to get his fuel costs down for his fleet of trucks, and decided that natural gas was the way to go for eleven vehicles—everything from pickup trucks to a tri-axle dump. He fuels them from a natural gas well on his property in Liberty Borough using a compressor station on his farm that he built himself. His eleven vehicles are now all equipped with dual fuels—some run on gasoline and CNG, and others run on diesel and CNG.

“When someone in the area needs natural gas, I just call Rich, and he says ‘Sure send them up!’” states Executive Director Rick Price. “I had heard so much about what Rich was doing I had to go and see it for myself.”



Rich (left) talks with municipal representatives at a People's Natural Gas workshop.

Rich can be reached at 412-673-3988 to talk about retrofitting your vehicle, refueling stations, or natural gas fuel.



Port Vue Plumbing natural gas compressor station.

“He has an electric generator that powers his shop area that runs on compressed natural gas. Rich also has a drilling rig and fork lift that run on it as well. Now he plans to convert some of his other motorized equipment like his bulldozer and shovel. “

Rich is clearly believer in natural gas fuel and has plans to help personally fund stations in the local area. He even has a great idea about getting people started by renting them a small compressor unit to try with just a few vehicles, before asking folks to spend a large amount of money on infrastructure. “We need to get this started in this area, and someone has to do it,” Rich states. Rich has participated in many events including gatherings at Washington and Jefferson College and the Western Pennsylvania American Public Works Association and is a great supporter of PRCC.



Bi-fuel pickup truck and tri-axle dump truck retrofitted for natural gas



Question of the Month: Help! I am confused about the terminology associated with aftermarket vehicle and engine conversions.

Answer: The conversion vocabulary can sometimes be difficult to understand, particularly because the terms are not always used consistently. Below is a glossary of terms related to alternative fuel and advanced vehicle and engine conversions, broken down into categories. Please note that this information is meant to be a general Clean Cities reference guide; other agencies and organizations may define these terms differently.

Aftermarket Conversion

Aftermarket conversion – An aftermarket conversion is a vehicle or engine which is modified to allow it to operate using a different fuel or power source than the one for which it was originally designed and certified to use. An aftermarket conversion can also be referred to as a **retrofit** or an **upfit**.

Key Players

Conversion manufacturer - An entity that produces and sells aftermarket conversion systems. A conversion manufacturer may have technicians that install the conversion system or may work with a qualified system retrofitter (QSR) to complete the installation.

QSR – An entity that operates independently of, but works closely with, conversion manufacturers to perform aftermarket conversions. QSRs are also commonly referred to as **upfitters** or **installers**.

Original equipment manufacturer (OEM) – An entity that produces new vehicles and engines “off the assembly line.” Some OEMs produce vehicles and engines that are prepped for conversions, meaning they include components that are compatible with certain alternative fuels.

Aftermarket Conversion Types

Non-engine fuel type – Involves changes to the vehicle components (not including the powertrain) to enable the engine to operate on an alternative fuel, but does not involve significant changes to the vehicle's OEM-certified engine.

Rebuild – Involves modifying the original engine to be powered by a different fuel type.

Repower – Involves replacing the existing engine with a new, rebuilt, or remanufactured engine powered by a different fuel type.

Powertrain – Involves changes to the vehicle powertrain, and could involve installing an additional electric motor.

Resulting Vehicle Fuel Configuration

Dedicated – Vehicles that operate exclusively on an alternative fuel.

Bi-fuel and Dual-fuel – Vehicles that can operate on a combination of alternative and conventional fuel. The terms bi-fuel and dual-fuel are often used interchangeably and are defined differently by various agencies and organizations, but may include:

- Vehicles that operate on a blend of an alternative fuel and a conventional fuel stored in one fuel tank; commonly called **flexible-fuel vehicles**.
- Vehicles that operate on an alternative fuel or conventional fuel stored in separate tanks, using one fuel at a time.
- Vehicles that operate on an alternative fuel and use a conventional fuel for ignition assist. These vehicles automatically switch over completely to an alternative after the engine has warmed up.

President's Corner by Jan Lauer

The business community has for the most part been the first mover in the deployment of alternative fueled vehicles in the region. The same opportunity exists for municipalities, institutions, non-profits and other groups to reduce operating and maintenance costs and extend vehicle life as it does for the business community. Not only can most of the funding sources that are available to support deployment in the business community also be used to support investments in the public and non-profit sectors, but many other funding sources can be accessed as well.

PRCC is currently working with communities in the South Hills to build a business case for municipal conversion to bi-fuel vehicles and possibly dedicated alternative fueled vehicles in time. We are also starting to work with non-profit organizations to provide them with information and help them access funding as well. We have proposed the idea of building a purchasing and fund raising consortium of non-profits interested in alternative fueled vehicles and are currently assessing interest.

Through education and outreach to all sectors that comprise our region, we can help to advance the use of alternative fueled vehicles and support the parallel investment in public refueling infrastructure that is needed for all to be successful.

Mike Lickert from Talon Logistics Speaks at NAFA Meeting

When it comes to safety, Giant Eagle (Talon Logistics) is a leader, especially when it comes to training drivers. Mike Lickert, Corporate Fleet Manager, spoke at a recent meeting of the Greater Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Fleet Management Association (NAFA) meeting about what Giant Eagle is doing in the alternative fuels area, as well as the Safety Training Program they have.



Giant Eagle has spent thousand's of dollars on a Mobile Training Trailer to instruct their drivers on how to best avoid accidents. Mike brought the trailer to an event held at Milan Corporation's Headquarters in South Pointe. Each attendee was able to actually sit in the driver's seat and go through a computer safety class driving a tractor trailer. The trainers are able to create situations for the drivers on running a red light, pedestrians walking in front of the vehicle, making turns, and backing the vehicle into a parking area.

At the meeting, Mike also discussed some of the projects that they are doing with bio-diesel and natural gas.



Mike Lickert (right), corporate fleet manager for Talon Logistics, Inc., stands in front of Volvo daycabs.



NAFA meeting attendees get a chance to explore the driver safety training trailer. Rick Price from PRCC can be seen in the tan jacket.



Member Highlight: Lutitia Clipper, PhD



PEOPLES NATURAL GAS™



Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities Presents at Area GM 2012 Review

PRCC Executive Director Rick Price presented at the 2012 General Motors Roll Out held June 14, 2011 at the Four Points Sheraton in Cranberry, PA. PRCC EV Committee member Jeff Tomlin of GM welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Jeff talked about all the new changes coming for cars and what vehicles were being continued and which vehicles were in their final year and were no longer going to be offered in 2012.

In addition to the cars there were other presentations about truck and alternative fueled vehicles as well as maintenance program and upgrades. On display and available for a ride and drive were the Chevy Volt, a Cadillac Escalade, Chevy Camaro Convertible, and other GM vehicles.

PRCC talked about the DOE Clean Cities Program and specifically about what grant funding was available to attendees.

Lutitia works as a System Process Improvement Specialist/Design Sales and Transportation at Peoples Gas. She has worked in the gas industries for many years and is on the Gaseous Fuels Committee of Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities.

Lutitia has been very involved with trying to promote natural gas as a transportation fuel all around the area. She works to bring folks together to assemble enough interest in natural gas fueled vehicles to support the cost of refueling infrastructure in strategic locations identified by the PRCC Gaseous Fuels Committee.

She is always available to lend her expertise to help promote the use of CNG. Peoples Gas already has a number of CNG fueled vehicles in its fleet and is looking at increase the number of vehicles in the future. As an example, Lutitia arranged meetings with the owners of a City Pride Station in the Greensburg area so that those who were interested could see one of their stations and talk with their folks about natural gas vehicle use and maintenance.

Lutitia is also eager to see Peoples Gas as a leader in vehicle deployment itself. Peoples Gas is one of the few companies that still maintains private stations that it had installed in the past at regional offices so the company is well positioned to roll out an expanded fleet.

"We need more folks like Lutitia with the enthusiasm and drive to help move compressed natural gas as a transportation fuel in Pennsylvania and the nation," states Rick Price, Executive Director of Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities.

Municipalities Visit People's Natural Gas Facility in Greensburg and Vogue Limousines

Officials from Peters Township and Upper St. Clair were hosted by Lutitia Clipper at the PNG refueling facility in Greensburg. Jan Lauer, President of PRCC, provided an update on the funding streams and requirements for submission. Rich Perkoski of Port Vue Plumbing brought his new bi-fueled NGV truck and Denny Riazzi of PNG demonstrated refueling of his company vehicle. It was great to have both new and “workhorse” longtime in service vehicles available for their review and Q&A.

After a tour of the PNG NGV Greensburg refueling station, the group went to a PNG customer in Jeannette, PA—K Rentals/Vogue Limousines—to see the new NGV refueling station and natural gas powered dedicated trolley vehicles.



Municipal officials touring the People's Gas on-site CNG station in Greensburg (compressor station to the left, and the dispenser station below)



Demonstration of refueling of one of two new limousine trollys with a Fuelmaker refueling unit at Vogue Limousine on Route 30 near Jeannette, PA, a customer of People's Natural Gas.

Meet Carly Lang!

Carley Lang is currently serving as the public relations intern with Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities. She graduated from Penn State University in May 2011 with highest distinction, earning a bachelor's degree in public relations and minors in both psychology and international studies. A Pittsburgh native, Miss Lang lives in Carnegie, PA..

Carley will be with us through this spring, supported by a grant from US DOE. Check out the great work she has been doing on the PRCC website at www.pgh-cleancities.org



Upcoming Events

Board of Directors Meeting Schedule for 2011

October 5, 2011

Stakeholder Meetings

September 16, 2011, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM; Stakeholder meeting at Community College of Allegheny County, West Hills Center; Agenda includes committee updates, grant reports, and other important topics.

October 7, 2011, 10:00 AM—2:00 PM; Odyssey Day, Community College of Allegheny County, West Hills Center; open to the public; goal is to help educate fleet managers, municipalities, school districts, and others about alternative fuel and advanced technology vehicles and the important role these vehicles play in providing solutions to our nation's growing energy security and environmental issues.

Membership

Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities is always looking for new members! Our job is to help you understand the value and importance of converting to alternative fuels. We can tell you about the incentives available to you for using alternative fuels. We can help guide you through making smart financial and environmental choices about purchasing an alternative fueled vehicle or using an alternative fuel. Become a member, and we can help you assess your fleet and objectives, as well as work with you to acquire funding assistance. If you would like to join and/or volunteer, please contact Rick Price at coordinator@pgh-cleancities.org

Contribute Your News!

We want to showcase your news and successes, and we welcome ideas for articles. Please feel free to contact Rick Price, Executive Director/Coordinator, at 412-735-4114 or at coordinator@pgh-cleancities.org

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