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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

Vehicle Fleet Operations: Going Green at MTA Bridges and Tunnels

MTA Bridges and Tunnels' Fleet Operations has reduced the time, effort and cost of replacing vehicle parts through careful recycling, and decreased the agency's carbon foot print by 216,464 lbs. last year through use of alternative fuel. The savings are expected to be even greater this year, and by the end of 2009 the agency expects 80% of its vehicles to be on alternative fuel.

The 400+ vehicle fleet includes patrol cars, tow-trucks, road-sweepers, sedans, pick-ups, loaders, snow conveyors and other specialty vehicles necessary for operations and maintenance at the agency's nine New York City crossings.

"Bridges and Tunnels is strongly committed to sustainability," said Roy V. Parks, Vice President for Procurement and Materials. Parks is Bridges and Tunnel's Sustainability Coordinator for the MTA-wide initiative. "Fleet management plays a critical role and has been enthusiastic about meeting the challenge."

The motto of the 28-member Fleet auto shop crew could well be, "We leave no part unused." The environmental and cost-saving benefits of recycling are in addition to getting repairs done quickly and vehicles back in service. The mechanics inspect and work on an average of 50-60 cars per month, and the patrol cars especially can take a beating as they are in constant use in the course of daily duty.

When a vehicle is beyond repair, workers remove all usable parts prior to sending the carcass for scrap. Everything from fenders and interiors to electrical components and engines are stored in a special room for future use. This saves money on replacement parts and since replacement body panels are already painted, no further use of chemicals is generally required.

The patrol cars are returned to service within hours as opposed to days or possibly weeks. For example, when a vehicle recently sustained body damage, its engine was quickly installed in another vehicle with a perfectly good body but in need of an engine. Other working auto parts were also salvaged from the body-damaged vehicle.

The Fleet shop adheres to an aggressive maintenance schedule, which results in the best mileage and maximum availability of vehicles for Bridge and Tunnel Officers and other employees, according to Vic Cardella, Director of Fleet Management. "We need our service vehicles to run in optimal condition, just as our bridges and tunnels are carefully maintained, to ensure a safe and secure customer environment," explains Cardella.

Strides in Alternative Fuel Conversion

Bridges and Tunnels has steadily increased its inventory of alternative fuel and electric hybrid vehicles. Recent achievements include the conversion of the Fleet's 229 diesel-powered fleet vehicles to bio-fuel, or bio-diesel.

Bio-diesel is a renewable diesel replacement fuel manufactured from domestically produced oils such as soybean or recycled cooking oils and blended with ultra-low sulfur diesel. Using bio-diesel fuel in conventional diesel engines has a positive impact on the environment, with substantial reduction emitted into the air of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and particulate matter-the "carbon footprint." Cardella says that by using alternative fuels such as E-85 (a mix of ethanol and gasoline) and bio-diesel and by procuring flex-fuel and electric hybrid vehicles, the agency scored success in reducing its carbon footprint last year, and that percentage will only rise as older vehicles are replaced going forward. Of the agency's light-duty (8,500 lbs. or less) fleet, 119 vehicles out of 185 (64.3%) are now using E-85 or are hybrid-electric. Plans for 2009 include replacement of an additional 28 gasoline-fueled cars with alternate fuel vehicles, bringing the agency's overall light-duty fleet to more than 80% alternate fuel.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels' facilities, which connect the five boroughs of New York City, are the Triborough, Throgs Neck, Bronx-Whitestone, Henry Hudson, Verrazano-Narrows, Cross Bay Veterans Memorial and Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Bridges, and the Queens Midtown and Brooklyn-Battery Tunnels. The agency is the largest toll authority in the nation, helping more than 850,000 vehicles and more than a million people reach their destination each day.



Photo caption: Roadway sweeper truck uses cleaner bio-diesel fuel, as do all heavy-duty service vehicles in the agency's Fleet.