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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Bridges and Tunnels Are Greener, Cleaner And Brighter Thanks To Environmental Initiatives

MTA Bridges and Tunnels is a cleaner, greener and brighter agency thanks to continuing efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. By reducing paper consumption, switching to alternative fuels, recycling, installing energy-saving LED lights and buying certified "green" cleaning agents, B&T has reduced the amount of greenhouse gases released into the air by nearly 1.6 million pounds, or 19 percent since 2006.

Among the agency's initiatives is buying green cleaning products that have the EcoLogo or Green Seal of approval, which means it has little or no impact on the environment. "One of our larger maintenance cleaning tasks is tunnel washing and because of the large amounts of soap and water used for the task, it seemed like an obvious choice for evaluating a green product," said Patrick Parisi, Bridges and Tunnels Chief Maintenance Officer and head of the agency's sustainability efforts.

In the past, the agency had used one product to wash tunnel walls at and another to clean toll booths and toll booth lanes on the plazas but the new "green" cleaner can remove grime, soot and grease away from both the tunnels, toll booths and pavement in toll lanes.

The agency is also participating in New York City's Million Trees campaign to plant and care for new trees. Since 2009, Bridges and Tunnels has planted 76 new trees, including ginko, tupelo, redbud, zelkova, linden, planetree and oak trees, at the Throgs Neck and Robert F. Kennedy Bridges, and the Queens Midtown Tunnel.

Another 24 trees are scheduled to be planted in 2011 at the Bronx-Whitestone, Verrazano-Narrows, Marine Parkway-Gil Hodges Memorial, Cross Bay Veterans Bridges and the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel.

Here's a look at some other notable B&T reductions:

Paper

Using network sharing for printers, electronic distribution of reports, double-sided printing and other measures, Bridges and Tunnels has reduced paper consumption at the agency by more than 4.25 million sheets since 2006. To visualize: if all the saved paper were stacked in a pile it would be **twice** the height of the 693-foot tall Verrazano-Narrows Bridge towers.

LED Necklace Light Replacement

The process of replacing old 100-watt mercury vapor lights on our necklace-lit bridges with high-efficiency, light-emitting diode, or LED fixtures, continued at the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge. Crews finished replacing 190 mercury vapor lights to LED lighting on April 18th, just in time for Earth Day. The energy-saving LED lights help reduce the amount of electricity needed to power the decorative, necklace lights by approximately 73 percent.

The Verrazano was the first to get 262 new LED lights in a project completed in April 2009. The Throgs Neck Bridge is next up. Some 104 lights will be changed beginning this summer. The Bronx-Whitestone Bridge is slated to have its 190 mercury fixtures changed beginning in 2013.

Alternative Fuel

The alternative fuel program has grown since it began in 2005 when the agency began using E-85 fuel, which is a mixture of 15 percent gasoline and 85 percent ethanol, and purchasing flex-fueled vehicles. In 2006, its first full year of use, B&T had 43 flex-fuel vehicles using 6,405 gallons of E-85. By 2010, the flex-fuel fleet had grown to 150 vehicles using nearly 79,000 gallons of E-85. B&T also has a total of 30 Hybrid/Electric vehicles in its fleet.

Recycling

Efforts to recycle everything from fluorescent light bulbs to batteries and tires also continued in 2010, with Bridges and Tunnels recycling 418.5 tons of mixed paper, 209 tons of plastic and nearly 84 tons of metal.

"We are committed to doing all we can as an agency to promote new ways to conserve and recycle resources while continuing to reduce our impact to the region's ecological carbon footprint," Parisi said.



Bridge and Tunnel Maintainers Charlie Torrillo (foreground) and Jeff Calichio (facing front) remove old mercury necklace light from atop the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge.



B&T Maintainer Jeff Calichio installs new energy-efficient LED light atop RFK Bridge. LED lights help cut the amount of electricity needed to power the necklace lights by 73 percent.