

2011 Clean Cities Coalition Support Contract SUCCESS STORY

For 2011 Rogue Valley Clean Cities focused its educational efforts on brining the potential of Alternative Fuels to the fleet operators in Southern Oregon. This was done through a number of different outreach events as well as working one on one with fleet operators that were interested in moving forward with new vehicles using Alternative Fuels. We achieved significant media exposure with the events we hosted as well as those we sponsored. We have been very successful in having the four major television stations provide news coverage during the local morning and evening local news shows. The two local morning radio talk shows have also provided a significant amount of coverage for our events as well as interviews with participants.

On November 14, 2010, RVCC welcomed the International Zero Race to Medford, Oregon. The Swiss, German and Australian driving teams started in Geneva, Switzerland August 16, 2010 and finished the 80-day, around-the-world race at the United Nations Palace in January 2011. The plug-in electric vehicles completed over 25,000 miles with zero tail pipe emissions by the time they reached Medford. This event was covered by our local television stations and news paper.

On February 9, 2011, Rogue Valley Clean Cities hosted the opening of the first public propane fueling station in the valley. Blue Star Gas opened a card lock propane fueling station on Crater Lake Avenue in Central Point. The propane fueling station will be available to the public to any customer who receives training and the card lock from Blue Star. This event was well attended by local media with all of our local TV stations conducting interviews and providing coverage on the local evening news programs.

June 29, 2011, found over 30 participants at our CNG conference for fleet managers. This was a well attended event with participation from both public and private fleet operators. Representative from both of Oregon's Senators attended the event. During the discussion on providing CNG for fleets, Garry Penning of Rogue Disposal and Recycling announced a plan to convert landfill gas (methane) to natural gas and make this alternative fuel available for Jackson County, cities and commercial fleets. Also, Rogue Disposal will begin converting its waste truck fleet to CNG.

In August we convened an electric vehicle forum that was attended by more than 75 members of the public as well as another significant media presence. In addition to the local Chevrolet and Nissan dealerships which were presenting the Chevy Volt and Nissan Leaf during the event, we had a number of other dealerships that contacted RVCC and asked if they could participate. While not part of our official program we made space available for them to present their current hybrid vehicle offerings.

On September 22, 2011, we co-sponsored the Propane Autogas Conference at the Jackson County Auditorium. Speakers from Campbell-Parnell, GMC, Roush, Cascade Sierra Solutions, Isuzu, Ferrell Gas and DSU Peterbilt made presentations on the use of propane for automotive fuel and the vehicles available to buy or convert to propane fuel. The event had over 60 fleet operators from all over Southern Oregon.



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Our public outreach over the past year has resulted in wide spread media coverage of our events and brought a deeper awareness of the availability of alternative fuel vehicles to both the general public as well as local fleet operators.

Propane Conversions: Mike Quilty conducts fleet outreach for Rogue Valley Clean Cities Coalition. He worked with the City of Central Point, Oregon to encourage them to switch a number of vehicles to Alternative Fuels. After meetings with Mike Quilty, the Police Department and Public Works staff decided to investigate the potential of switching to alternative fuel vehicles. As a result of these efforts, both the police department and public works decided to pursue grant opportunities to fund conversion of a number of vehicles to propane. Mike Quilty encouraged the staff to contact Blue Star Gas and apply for a Congestion Management Air Quality Grant from the Rogue Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. Additionally, Blue Star reached out to local transit provider Rogue Valley Transit District to encourage them to team up with Blue Star and Central Point to fund the conversion of 10 paratransit vans. This group was successful in being awarded approximately \$100,000 for the conversion of up to 23 vehicles to propane. The Requests for Proposals for the purchase and installation of the conversion kits will be published shortly.

CNG Interest: In the past year there has been an explosion of interest in alternative fuels for both light and heavy duty vehicles. We have seen a significant increase in interest in CNG vehicles for our local refuse collection fleets with both Rogue Disposal and Southern Oregon Sanitation pursuing the conversion of their vehicles to CNG. Several local cities have purchased or are considering the purchase of CNG or propane powered street sweepers. Several local trucking firms have looked at CNG powered tractors for local usage. The lack of regional/national fueling infrastructure is preventing the conversion of our long haul fleet to CNG or LNG. In addition to the transit district and cities, a large number of private firms have contacted both Clean Cities and the Rogue Valley MPO about propane conversions and new build propane fueled vehicles. They are all very interested in the availability of grants or low interest loan programs to help defray the initial upfront cost of equipping the vehicles and the availability of fueling infrastructure.

Lessons Learned: There are several important lessons from the outreach we have conducted this year on Alternative Fuels. Education is very important and there is a pent up demand for information on using alternative fuels of all types. This interest is very wide spread and includes municipal fleet managers, private fleet operators and the public. While “true believers” will be early adopters regardless of cost, it must make economic sense before the majority of users will convert. That wide spread availability of a fuel is very important to those considering converting away from petroleum. We are sitting on a pent up demand for vehicles that cost less to fuel and use cleaner fuel to power them. We have directly reached over 150 persons interested in either individual purchase for private use to fleet operators with up to 350 vehicles that are interested in the economic benefits of conversion to Alternative Fuels. This does not count the thousands who read newspaper articles or saw or heard the television and radio coverage of our outreach efforts.

