



Alternative Fuels to the Rescue

ETCFC.ORG

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NEWS RELEASE

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THREE FLEETS HELP PUSH EAST TENNESSEE OVER THE MILESTONE OF 50 FLEETS USING BIODIESEL

TDOT, TVM and BVU Have All Started Their Transition to Fleet-wide B20

Knoxville, TN - With no fleets in East Tennessee using biodiesel in March 2004, the area has come a long way in a fairly short period of time—under two years—to hit and pass the mark of 50 fleets using the fuel.

Three recent additions to the list—Tennessee Valley Marble (TVM), Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and Bristol Virginia Utilities (BVU)—are either already using B20 or are using a lower blend in all their vehicles and hope to complete the journey by having all their fleet on B20 some time in the next few months.

TDOT has been looking at biodiesel action regionally and nationwide and has been involved in Tennessee's three Clean Cities coalition's meetings and events over the past three years, all along assessing the right way to get biodiesel started in their fleet. TDOT made the step starting in November in their region 1 area (Knoxville and Johnson City). Now 133 on-road vehicles run on B20, and TDOT plans to transition fleets in other TDOT regions to B20 in the future.

Conversations have been taking place with TVM for over a year and all the pieces fell into place recently for them to get started with B5. Tom White, president of TVM, has had an interest in the fuel for some time and was able to bring that to fruition once his supplier, the Blount-Greenback Farmers Co-op, started carrying biodiesel. "We're interested (in using biodiesel) because not only will it help our company, but it will also benefit our community," says White. TVM uses B5 in seven off-road vehicles including backhoes, loaders and large forklifts.

Perhaps the fastest fleet to move from first steps to fuel in the ground is BVU. They had just begun learning about biodiesel and attended an ETCFC regional meeting in Kingsport to get some added perspective on the idea. Within two weeks, they had received answers to the remaining questions, requested bids from local suppliers and already received B5 in their underground tank. "It's a great fit for us," says Craig Blevins, supervisor of equipment maintenance. "We strive to make a difference in the community and this not only does that but helps us and the U.S. ... it's really a win-win-win."

To see the list of 50 fleets in East Tennessee that are using biodiesel blends, go online to <www.etcfc.org> to the "ET-biodiesel" page. The list is on the left side of the page.

Biodiesel, an American-made renewable fuel, is made from virgin or used vegetable oils or animal fats. Removing the glycerin from vegetable oil or animal fat leaves methyl esters (the chemical name for biodiesel). Its expanded use by public and private vehicle fleets and individuals is improving air quality in East Tennessee and reducing our nation's dependence on imported oil.

