



June 24 - 29, 2002

**Gatlinburg . Pigeon Forge . Sevierville . Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SEVIER COUNTY KICKS OFF “CLEAN AIR WEEK”  
WITH ELECTRIC AND FUEL CELL BUSES**

**(Sevier County, TN)** The East Tennessee communities of Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge and Sevierville will celebrate Clean Air Week on June 24-29 with one of the largest demonstrations of low-emission hybrid-electric, fuel cell, compressed natural gas and low-sulfur diesel transit buses in U.S. history.

“Clean, alternative-fuel public transportation could make a very positive impact on the economic growth of Sevier County, the health and well-being of local residents, and the experience of visitors to the Great Smoky Mountains area,” noted Larry Waters, county executive. “For the entire week, all the vehicles in the Sevier County fleet, including trucks and trolleys, will operate on ultra-low-sulfur fuel.”

The week’s festivities will kick off with the “Clean Air Express,” a parade of alternative-fuel vehicles, including a fuel cell bus designed and operated by Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. The fuel cell bus emits only clean water vapor and heat. Participants in the Clean Air Week celebration will be able to ride in clean electric and hybrid-electric buses, compressed natural gas buses and possibly a methanol-fueled bus. There will also be an opportunity to “Ride & Drive” a variety of low-emission hybrid-electric cars, such as the Toyota *Prius*, Honda *Insight* and Honda *Civic*. Other planned activities include appearances by state and regional VIPs, contests, refreshments and balloons, flags and prizes for the kids. Additional details about the scheduled events will be available soon.

Clean Air Week is part of an ongoing effort by a team of city and county officials, transit system managers, Tennessee Department of Transportation representatives and civic leaders to review public transit options in Sevier County. “Although the Great Smoky Mountains National Park remains America’s most visited national park, we are very concerned about the

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impact that air pollution is having on the experience of those visitors and the natural resources the park is charged with protecting,” said Mike Tollefson, superintendent of the Park. “Transportation is a major contributor to the pollution problem, so we are very interested in any alternative to traditional fossil-fueled vehicles.” According to recent National Park Service air pollution data, the Great Smoky Mountains is one of the most polluted national parks in the U.S.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) is the primary sponsor of Sevier County’s Clean Air Week. The Electric Transit Vehicle Institute (ETVI), a nonprofit organization located in Chattanooga, Tennessee, is managing the event. ETVI maintains an active communications and education outreach program, focusing on the environmental benefits of alternative fuels in public transportation.

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