



Nat'l Biodiesel Board
3337A Emerald Ln.
P O Box 104898
Jefferson City, MO
65110-4898
(573) 635-3893 phone
(800) 841-5849
(573) 635-7913 fax
www.biodiesel.org

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 22, 2005

Contact: Jenna Higgins/NBB
1-800-841-5849
Ann Pitcher/P.S. Communications
(630) 887-0278

Chicago School Buses Adopt Biodiesel

Lt. Governor kicks off implementation of cleaner burning fuel on Earth Day

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – This Earth Day many Chicago area school children ride, for the first time, on school buses powered by cleaner-burning biodiesel. Chicago School Transit, the first school bus service in the Chicago Metropolitan Area to use a biodiesel blend, kicked off its new fuel program today.

Biodiesel is a fuel made from renewable resources like soybean oil and other fats and vegetable oils. The school buses run on B20, a blend of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent diesel. B20 reduces exhaust emissions that are a threat to human health.

Illinois Lt. Governor Pat Quinn made the announcement today at the Andrew Jackson Language Academy in Chicago. “Starting today, thousands of Chicago students will breathe easier thanks to soy biodiesel fuel in their school buses, an All-American fuel produced from Illinois soybeans,” he said.

Studies have shown that children riding school buses are exposed to a higher level of emissions than other children. In fact, a new analysis by researchers at the University of California - Berkeley found that children on school buses collectively inhale as much or more exhaust emitted from those buses as does the rest of the city's population. The results highlight the problem of “self-pollution,” or exhaust from the vehicle leaking into the cabin, particularly among older buses. Exhaust emissions inhaled on a consistent basis, from petroleum diesel fuel exhaust, have been linked to the causes of asthma and other respiratory conditions.

“Chicago joins more than 100 other school districts nationwide that have decided to make reducing school bus emissions a priority and concluded that biodiesel is a good choice, especially when buying new buses isn’t an option,” said Darryl Brinkmann, chairman of the non-profit National Biodiesel Board and a soybean farmer from Carlyle, Ill. “B20 immediately reduces harmful emissions without changing the bus fleet.”

(more)

In addition to reducing particulate matter, biodiesel cuts carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas, and unburned hydrocarbons, which contribute to the formation of smog. Biodiesel emissions also reduce by 80 to 90 percent potential cancer causing compounds. The fuel is nontoxic and biodegradable.

“Every day, families entrust us with the safety of their children,” said John Benish, Jr., COO of Chicago School Transit parent company, Cook-Illinois Corp. “As a Chicago leader in alternative fuels, we wanted to be the first to improve the air quality and provide a cleaner and safer atmosphere for school children.”

Chicago School Transit is using soy-based biodiesel as part of the “Illinois Clean School Bus Program,” developed and administered by Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA). The purpose of the program is to provide a healthier environment for children by reducing the emissions from diesel-powered school buses and improve the air quality in local communities.

Cook-Illinois Corporation, which operates 1,400 school buses in more than 15 Chicago area communities, is based in Oak Forest, Illinois. The company’s biodiesel is distributed by BioEnergy Supply, LLC based in Frankfort, Ill., in conjunction with Hartney Fuel Oil Company.

Biodiesel is the only alternative fuel to have fully completed the rigorous Health Effects testing required by the Clean Air Act. Results show biodiesel poses significantly less of a risk to human health than petroleum diesel. Today, it is the fastest growing alternative fuel in America, and more 500 fleets use biodiesel nationwide. Biodiesel has similar horsepower, torque and BTU content compared to petroleum diesel. It offers excellent lubricity and higher cetane than diesel fuel. Biodiesel is registered with the EPA as a fuel and fuel additive.

###

Readers can learn more about biodiesel by visiting <http://www.biodiesel.org>. This project sponsored by the USDA Biodiesel Education Program.