

LOCAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRESSES

In its continuing commitment toward excellence in energy efficiency and cost effectiveness, Miami-Dade County Public Works and Waste Management Department (PWWM) is partnering with the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to evaluate the effectiveness of hydraulic hybrid refuse haulers. This technology utilizes hydraulics to capture energy from both the engine and the brake system, resulting in substantial fuel savings and greatly reducing brake wear in vehicles like refuse trucks.



Following its November 2014 project proposal to the County, Colorado-based NREL researchers Ken Kelly and Bob Prohaska met on-site with Fleet Management Division Director Danny Diaz, key PWWM staff and SE Florida Clean Cities Coordinator, Chris Heshmati in January 2015. Details of the research plan were reviewed and the study proceeded to compare hydraulic hybrid vehicles (HHVs) to conventional vehicles over a period of several months. The study involves on-vehicle data logging that tracks such criteria as engine speed, commanded torque and fuel rate while accounting for such criteria as the region's latitude, longitude, and altitude and each vehicle's mileage and average speed.

Funded by the USDOE's Advanced Vehicle Testing Activity and in close coordination with the national USDOE Clean Cities Program, data collection will be completed early in 2016 and results will then be published in detailed technical and summary reports that will allow for comparisons with other fleets in other regions of the country. An added benefit for Miami-Dade County's PWWM will be the opportunity to compare this technology with other technologies and alternative fuel options.

Of the research partnership, Ken Kelly says, "Miami-Dade County is a leader in demonstrating advanced technologies and we like working with them because of their willingness, enthusiasm and attention to detail in their record-keeping."

To learn more about NREL's fleet test and evaluation activities or to track the progress of the Miami-Dade hydraulic hybrid vehicle evaluation project, visit www.nrel.gov/transportation/fleetttest.html.

Taking Green Ideas for a Ride

Southeast Florida Clean Cities has started a new idle reduction campaign. This campaign makes use of the IdleBox Toolkit created by the U.S. Dept. of Energy and is highlighted by a wonderful book provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) entitled, the Magic School Bus Gets Cleaned Up. Our first "Taking Green Ideas for a Ride" story time session was held on July 30th at North Dade Regional Library, with the help of the Children's Dept. Manager, Ricci Yuhico. Story time was enjoyed by the kids, parents and older siblings after each child received a fact-filled bookmark to color and an air quality/anti-idling sticker which was worn with a smile. This is just the first of many "Taking Green Ideas for a Ride" story time sessions and we are excited to continue this idle reduction campaign in schools and other libraries while ramping up idle reduction efforts with fleet administrators in the region, as well. Remember, a little idle reduction goes a long way!

ABC's Taught in Dealing with AFV Emergencies

When considering a shift towards alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs), among consumers' top concerns lies safety. First responders share that concern and have expressed the need for AFV safety education in addressing vehicular accidents. The U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities and West Virginia University have responded to the demand for AFV first responder training by developing the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium (NAFTC). Through NAFTC, first responder training sessions hosted by local Clean Cities Coalitions are being held around the country.



Through the leadership of Central Florida Clean Cities, Coalitions in Florida began hosting NAFTC sessions as part of an Advancing Alternative Fuels grant. As the contract neared completion, Southeast Florida Clean Cities was able to host its premier NAFTC Alternative Fuels First Responder training day for this region of the state.

The first NAFTC class in the Southeast Florida region was held at the Palm Beach Fire Rescue offices on June 12th. Knowledgeable staff from Florida Power and Light Company, Broward County Public Schools, and Waste Management brought the session to the next level by offering electric, flexfuel, compressed natural gas (CNG), and propane vehicles on-site for reference and discussion following the classroom-style informational presentation. With nearly 20 firefighters in attendance from both the City of Delray Beach and Palm Beach County Fire Rescues, the daylong workshop built confidence and reduced lingering anxieties about responding to a scene with AFVs. Many of the first responders remarked that they hope for more training sessions regarding AFVs. As Lieutenant MacCloud mused, "This [training] is the stuff we really get excited about, this is the stuff we like."



Palm Beach Fire Rescue videotaped the vehicle display portion of the training and once the film is completed, it can be shared with other first responders around the region and state. Coincidentally, this training opportunity is also serving as the kick-off for a new grant awarded to Florida Coalitions with Central Florida Clean Cities again taking the lead in organizing NAFTC training opportunities for Florida Coalitions and Southeast Florida can look forward to additional classes in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe Counties.

Big Cypress National Preserve Could Have Been an International Airport, But...

In the late 1960s, conservationists and outdoorsmen alike opposed the ruination of such ecologically and culturally valuable land, ultimately ushering the preserve into the protective arms of the National Park Service. Since then, park rangers have maintained their role as stewards by implementing the Green Parks Plan. After partnering with the U.S. Department of Energy, the Clean Cities National Parks Initiative is gaining momentum.



Florida Panther,
Puma concolor coryi
NPS Photo by Rodney Cammauf

As Big Cypress deepens its commitment to the Climate Friendly Parks Program, it also deepens its relationship with the region's Clean Cities and their shared mission through the Initiative.

Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition was invited to speak about the "Greening Our Rides" component of the Green Parks Plan at a recent Climate Friendly Parks Workshop in Ochopee, Florida. The presentation featured methods for greening a fleet and opened the floor for discussion specifically tailored to Big Cypress National Preserve. The park already boasts a photovoltaic array to power its Welcome Center, but rangers agree that they need to take alternative fuel discussions a step further and apply appropriate alternatives to their fleet. A lively brainstorming session yielded the following starting

points for reducing transportation-related GHG emissions:

- More employee commuting options (such as telework and carpooling)
- Public transportation options to access Big Cypress
- Replacement of conventional mowers with propane or electric-powered, as well as minimizing mowing areas
- Electric car charging stations for visitors and potential future fleet use
- Transition of all-terrain vehicles to utility task vehicles
- Development of an idle-reduction campaign within the park



An infographic explaining the role of photovoltaic power at Big Cypress Welcome Center informs visitors about the solar panels

These ideas will be further explored as the partnership between Big Cypress National Preserve and Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition continues to develop. Southeast Florida Clean Cities and Big Cypress look forward to becoming leaders in climate change response for Florida parks and preserves.

Pinecrest Gardens NDEW Summary

With perhaps the most beautiful venue of any NDEW event in the country, live oaks provided ample shade on September 19th at sunny Pinecrest Gardens where visitors of all ages enjoyed fun activities and EV owners shared their experiences and insights with attendees. Pinecrest Mayor Cindy Lerner welcomed enthusiasts and spoke of the role of local governments in promoting clean-energy communities. Miami-Dade County Commissioner Xavier Suarez extolled the virtues of renewable fuels and South Miami Mayor Philip Stoddard encouraged people to drive electric and offered free rides in his own EV, which was part of the event. Following the festivities, event Co-Chair and SE Florida Clean Cities Coordinator Christine Heshmati declared that public and private sector employers are feeling the increasing sense of EV readiness on the part of the public, and that the Coalition will be approaching local governments and private industry to take the Workplace Charging Challenge! For more information about the Challenge, please contact the Coalition.

The Student Internship Advantage

The Clean Cities Program has been working with Argonne National Laboratory for the past five years to provide internship opportunities for promising university students. Each intern is paired with a Clean Cities Coalition where he/she will learn valuable industry skills especially relating to alternative/renewable fuels, outreach about alternative transportation, and emerging vehicle technologies. The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition is fortunate to have been awarded intern this summer.



Sofia Thordin is a University of Florida student working on a B.S. degree in Sustainability in the Built Environment as well as a B.A. in Geography. Enrollment in a combined degree program also allows her to take classes toward a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning. Her primary goals this summer were enhancing communications through the Coalition webpage, assisting in publication of a new edition of the Coalition newsletter, conducting membership outreach, and creating an idle reduction campaign. I have already learned so much about drafting outreach material,” Sofia says, “Tailoring information to your audience and trimming superfluous details are communication skills that will benefit me in any career.” Sofia’s hands-on involvement included participating in a Coalition meeting focused on superior fleet management and E85 fuel, attending a National Park Service workshop that will “pave the way” to future work with Clean Cities, and joining firefighters in alternative fuel first responder training. Most recently, she assisted in preparations for a Coalition meeting focused on natural gas and she assisted with a Drive Electric Week event held in the Village of Pinecrest in September.

Coordinator Chris Heshmati observes, “Sofia was such an asset to our operations this past summer. Her insights into the field of alternative fuels and her fresh approach are sorely missed now that she has returned to UF for the fall semester.”

Fortunately, the Coalition has been awarded another student intern for the entire 2015-2016 school year. Natalia Neira is a Master Candidate of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Florida. She joined the SE Florida Clean Cities Coalition in September 2015 as she returned to the Region to finish her thesis. She aims to continue the effective use of communication tools that Sofia improved over the summer, as well as strengthening the Coalition’s membership network. Natalia participated in the National Drive Electric Week 2015 event held at Pinecrest Gardens, declaring afterward, “I learned so much at this event about the winning efforts of local governments in making South Florida a model for sustainability and long-term environmental planning. Making information available to the public in this type of setting is essential to take advantage of every opportunity in empowering communities to use alternative energy options that will reduce our dependency on gasoline.” Some of Natalia’s many responsibilities will be to continue the Coalition’s idle reduction and workplace charging campaigns, help prepare for the Clean Cities Alternative Fuel Vehicles Expo, and assist in reaching out with alternative fuels information to National Parks and Preserves in Southeast Florida.



UPCOMING EVENT!

Southeast Florida Clean Cities 2015 Alternative Fuel Vehicles Expo

When: November 30, 2015 - 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

Where: Florida Department of Transportation District 4 Headquarters

What: Electric charging station ribbon-cutting, noted alternative fuel experts, vehicle display



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