Propane School Buses Primed for Volkswagen's EMT Funding

By Todd Mouw, president of ROUSH CleanTech



Nearly four years ago, the Volkswagen diesel emissions scandal erupted. It led to a settlement of over $14 billion with $2.9 billion earmarked for the Environmental Mitigation Trust (EMT) to fund projects that reduce nitrogen oxides — harmful emissions regulated under federal air quality standards because they are known to be harmful to human health and to the environment.

Since then, states have slated over $234 million of EMT funds for "clean diesel" projects. In comparison, electric has seen about $284 million of the funding. Propane and natural gas are well behind with only $44 million and $33 million, respectively.

Diesel may have its place as a transportation fuel, but not in heavy idle, start-stop applications, such as school bus, public transit, and food and beverage delivery, to name a few examples. In fact, in stop and go driving conditions, propane buses emit 96% less NOx than diesel buses. And, in a dollar-for-dollar comparison, school buses fueled by propane autogas reduce NOx the most — making them 93% more cost effective than diesel.

That's why propane school buses have presented a strong EMT funding opportunity. Here are some of the success stories:

- Iowa: Almost $8 million is going toward propane autogas school buses. In two rounds of funding, there has been 73 buses fueled by propane allocated — the most of any fuel type in the state, including clean diesel and electric.
- Tennessee: 10 school districts, five of which are new to propane, will receive propane autogas school buses. In total, over $4 million is slated for 65 propane autogas buses.
- New Hampshire: One school district added 14 propane buses with EMT funding, which its governor said will serve as a model for other similar projects in the state.
- Indiana: In phase one of funding, eight school districts were granted over $1.5 million toward the purchase of 60 propane school buses.

There are still EMT funding opportunities available in many states for school districts, school bus contractors and transit agencies, among others, to cover almost the entire cost of a new propane vehicle.

To learn more about ROUSH CleanTech's advanced clean transportation solutions, please visit ROUSHcleantech.com.



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