



PERC Praises STA Omaha's 435 Propane Vehicles & Savings Achieved

Propane buses in Omaha are saving the school district enough money to hire more teachers, according to a new "Straight Talk" video from the Propane Education & Research Council.

Omaha Public Schools and Student Transportation, Inc. collaborated on the 2013 deployment of 435 last year (F&F, July 10, 2013). OPS now operates some 96% of its school buses on propane, according to PERC, and has set a goal to become the first school district in the nation with a 100% propane autogas school bus fleet.

In addition to cost savings, the PERC video covers such topics as ease and convenience of maintenance, and performance of the propane autogas buses in the Nebraska winters.

"In the cold weather, propane buses are extremely easier to deal with than diesels," Brian Urwin, south Omaha STI shop manager, says in the video. "I didn't have any problems all year long with the 435 propane. They would fire up no matter how cold it was."

'A Huge, Huge Financial Benefit'

"Day-to-day maintenance on a propane bus is a lot easier than on a diesel," Urwin says. "You don't have the multi-thousand dollar particulate filters, you don't have to put any other fluid in."

"It was a huge, huge financial benefit for us as well," says Dr. Jerry Bartee, assistant superintendent of OPS. "We're able to save right in the neighborhood of about \$200,000-plus a year..."

"That's four or five classroom teachers year that we can hire."

The last word on propane from Ron Halley, STI fleet and facilities VP? "Jump in with both feet."

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