

*CASE STUDY:****Brooklyn Park***

The City of Brooklyn Park didn't wait around for a biodiesel mandate. When members of the National Association of Fleet Administrators started talking in 1998 about alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles, Steve Lawrence knew it was time to voluntarily conform to EPAct (Energy Policy Act of 1992 which requires certain fleets to acquire alternative fuel vehicles), Jon Thiel, his director, agreed. They wanted to be proactive and felt that by acting now they could save money and a lot of headaches in the long run. In fall 2001 the City of Brooklyn Park initiated their bio-diesel program.



After one winter of operation with absolutely no complications, they have expanded their program and as of March 2003 there are 101 vehicle units running on B20—one of the largest such projects currently underway in Minnesota.

City administrators thought that their effort would show the community that it was spending money wisely and planning ahead while making their operations more environmentally friendly. Biodiesel is safe, biodegradable, and reduces serious air pollutants such as soot, particulates, carbon monoxides, hydrocarbons, and air toxins. Biodiesel acts like a detergent additive, loosening and dissolving sediments. Biodiesel is also a superior lubricant.

While the fuel is a bit more expensive than standard diesel right now (about 4 cents higher), city staff feels it will reap the benefits of its forethought in the years to come. They feel the improvements in emissions, reduction in odor, and quieter operation of diesel powered vehicles and equipment will offset the cost difference in the fuel.

Brooklyn Park is now working with the University of Minnesota and Hennepin County to be "agents of change" in Minnesota, furthering biodiesel development around the state. They have agreed to work with the University's Center for Diesel Research on testing fuel additives that should both reduce biodiesel emissions and enhance biodiesel's performance, making biodiesel an even better option in years to come.

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