

Protecting Our Environment

Yellow School Buses: Greener Than Many Think

(NAPSA)—Here's good news about the environment that may surprise you: The nation's yellow school buses are turning green as the industry actively works to reduce emissions through positive environmental initiatives.

Many people overlook the inherent environmental advantage of school buses. It's estimated that every school bus replaces an average of 36 passenger cars. With more than 480,000 school buses out each day, nearly 17.3 million fewer vehicles are needed to transport kids to and from school.

Recent advances in school bus engine technology have created more environmental advantages. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says heavy-duty trucks and buses will soon reduce particulates by 90 percent.

"Not only are school buses the safest form of transportation for our students, they are more efficient than ever," said Mike Murray, CEO of FirstGroup America, the nation's largest provider of school transportation. "By continuously investing in our fleet, adopting new technologies, exploring alternative fuels and enacting the right policies, we significantly reduce bus emissions."

Reduced Idling

Even the little things make a difference. Drivers are trained to adhere to a no-idling policy, which requires them to turn off idling buses after no more than five minutes, unless weather conditions make it unsafe. Drivers are also trained to keep tires inflated at the proper pressure and follow the most fuel-efficient route possible.



Each school bus on the road replaces approximately 36 passenger cars.

Better Buses

School bus manufacturers are also working to improve technology to meet progressively stringent emissions standards. For example, new school bus engines from IC Bus reduce particulate matter by 90 percent and nitrogen oxide by 50 percent compared to previous emissions standards. John McKinney, president of IC Bus, notes, "By next year, our engines will even further reduce emissions and be fully compliant to the 2010 standards."

Further Improvements

The school bus industry is doing more to reduce school bus emissions, including:

- Updating bus fleets with vehicles that research shows run 60 times cleaner than buses built before 1990;
- Retrofitting older buses with special exhaust filters to reduce diesel particulate matter by approximately 40 percent;
- Exploring the use of green technologies and alternative fuels, such as hybrid electric, biodiesel, propane or compressed natural gas;
- Keeping school buses at peak performance through rigorous preventative maintenance programs.

Learn More

For more information, visit www.firststudentinc.com.