

FLEET NEWS™

News and Comment for the Nation's Fleets

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Part II - Radical Alternative to Low Bid Vehicle Purchasing

*Bob Stanton, Director
Polk County Fleet Management and
President, Florida Association of Governmental
Fleet Administrators (FLAGFA)*

Polk County's Success Story

Because your government fleet is a necessary evil and best kept 'seen but not heard', there is only one individual within your entire organization with the knowledge, interest, competence, and ability to effect action to address these challenges.

That individual is the Fleet Manager.

Here's an example of how one government fleet manager embraced the challenges, turning them into strategic and fundamental elements of a fleet sponsored initiative which completely transformed how they do business.

Although low bid was the County's primary acquisition method, Fleet Management believed low bid, while a good method for procuring pencils, paper and paperclips, was a poor acquisition method for vehicles and equipment.

Polk County Fleet Management of Bartow, Florida (PCFM) recognized these challenges and formulated a strategic approach to address not only these challenges but one that would be politically acceptable. It was structured to be so politically acceptable it was hard to reject.

Process Evolution Vehicle Replacement Program

In 1996, Polk County's Board of County Commissioners approved Fleet's proposal to begin seed funding a vehicle replacement program. The program's objective was to pre-fund the annual cost of replacement vehicles beginning in 1996

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Fleet News Profile: City of Lynchburg Fleet Services - a New Beginning in the Old South

City Profile

Nestled in the valley of the James River along the southeastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains is Lynchburg, VA, also known throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia as the City of Seven Hills.

No single-source centralized fleet authority existed within city government. Each agency was making its own fleet decisions and policy based on what was good for them and not for the City's fleet as a whole.

Named after a quaker ferryman by the name of John Lynch who in 1757 began providing transportation across the James River, Lynchburg received its charter as a city in 1786 making it a 215 year old municipality.

Located near the geographic center of the Commonwealth, the City is 180 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. and 195 miles west of Norfolk on the Atlantic Ocean.

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Vehicle Costs

New England and Far West Most Costly Areas to Drive; Southeast Cheapest

Vehicle owners in the New England states spend more per mile to own and operate their vehicles than anywhere else in the U.S., according to a cost analysis prepared for the AAA by Runzheimer International, a Rochester, Wisconsin-based firm.

Based on the blended costs of owning and operating a typical compact, intermediate, and full-size vehicle, New Englanders (52.2 cents per mile) and drivers in the Western states (52.0 cents per mile) pay the most. The least expensive region of the U.S. to drive is the Southeast.

Based on the blended costs of owning and operating a typical compact, intermediate, and full-size vehicle, New Englanders (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT) pay 52.2 cents per mile. Drivers in the Western states (AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV,

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National Fleet Conferences, Meetings and Events

CFN lists four months of national conferences, meetings and events.

November

5-6 Air Technologies 2001, South Coast AQMD, Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim. www.aqmdconferences.org

5-7 International Automotive Technicians' Network, Dearborn. Call (877) 550-4286.

8 Public Fleet Supervisor's Association (PFSA), "NUMMI Plant Tour." San Francisco Bay Area. Call Chuck Evans, President and Fleet Superintendent of East Bay Municipal Utility District at (510) 287-0878.

13 Public Equipment Managers Association (PEMA), Sacramento area. Leadership training - "Expressing Yourself," Sponsored by the City of Sacramento University. Cost is \$40.00 per student and will be at JJ North's on Florin Road. 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Call Kevin Erlandson, President and Fleet Manager of the City of Rocklin at (916) 632-4135.

15 Municipal Equipment Maintenance Association (MEMA), Southern California. Call Mike Jenks, President and Fleet Maintenance Supervisor of City of Victorville at (818) 898-1295.

December

11 Public Equipment Managers Association (PEMA), Sacramento area. Leadership training - "Domestic Violence" Sponsored by the City of Sacramento University. Cost is \$40.00 per student and will be at JJ North's on Florin Road. 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Call Kevin Erlandson, President and Fleet Manager of the City of Rocklin at (916) 632-4135.

18 Public Fleet Managers Association (Washington, Oregon, Canada). Host: City of Bellevue. Call Bill DeRousse, President and Fleet Manager of the City of Everett, WA at (425) 257-8802.

11-14 Electric Vehicle Association of the Americas Conference (EVAA), Sacramento. www.evaa.org or call (650) 365-2667

January 2002

5-13 Greater Los Angeles Auto Show, L.A. Convention Center. Call (310) 444-1850.

9-13 San Jose International Auto Show, Convention Center, San Jose. Call (310) 301-9019.

10 Public Fleet Supervisor's Association (PFSA), San Francisco Bay Area. Call Chuck Evans, President and Fleet Superintendent of East Bay Municipal Utility District at (510) 287-0878.

February 2002

12 Public Equipment Managers Association (PEMA), Sacramento area. "Ron Turley & Associates: Time studies and performance standards for mechanics." Call Kevin Erlandson, President and Fleet Manager of the City of Rocklin at (916) 632-4135.

19 Public Fleet Managers Association (Washington, Oregon, Canada). Host: Snohomish County P.U.D. Call Bill DeRousse, President and Fleet Manager of the City of Everett, WA at (425) 257-8802.

Upcoming 2002

April 14-16 20th Annual Equipment Maintenance Council Management Conference, Nashville. Call Stan Orr at (970) 384-0510 or ceo@equipment.org

April 2002 Florida Association of Governmental Fleet Administrators (FLAGFA), Plaza Resort, Daytona Beach Shores. Call Bob Stanton, President and Fleet Manager of Polk County at (863) 534-0387.

July 22-25 FedFleet 2002, 3rd National Federal Fleet Manager Workshop and Information Fair, GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy, Kansas City. Call 1-800-315-4333 or www.fedfleet.org

Announcements and People

Warren Laing, formerly of the City of Bellevue, Washington, has been named Fleet Manager of the City of Peoria, Arizona.

Dave Cowley, Fleet Manager of the City and County of San Francisco, has retired. **Jim Johnson**, long time deputy, has replaced him.

Jim LeRoy, Fleet Manager for the County of Stanislaus, has retired. **Steve DeMoss** is the new Fleet Manager.

NATIONAL RECRUITMENT

Equipment Maintenance Superintendent, City of Newport Beach, CA (\$73,116-\$89,088 annually - Close Date: December 14, 2001)

The City of Newport Beach, California is accepting applications for the position of Equipment Maintenance Superintendent. Under general direction of the General Services Director, this position manages the vehicle and equipment fleet of the City, which contains over 425 pieces of rolling stock including fire apparatus, utility equipment, refuse trucks, and refuse transfer equipment. The position is responsible for overall direction of the Equipment Maintenance Division through subordinate supervision and staff. Total budget of the Division is over \$1.4 million. The Superintendent administers an Internal Service Fund for the purchase of rolling stock that will expend over \$2.7 million this fiscal year on new equipment. Minimum qualifications include five years of increasingly responsible automotive and equipment maintenance experience including two years in a supervisory capacity. The ideal candidate will have extensive experience in the development of equipment and vehicle specifications, and in the principles, practices, and methods used in fleet management, personnel and budget management, preventative maintenance, and equipment repair, and fleet automation software. Familiarity with Fleet Anywhere software is preferred. Closing date for the position is December 14, 2001. For a copy of the job announcement further detailing this employment opportunity, contact the City of Newport Beach Human Resources Department, 3300 Newport Boulevard, Newport Beach, CA 92658-8915, (949) 644-3300.

Fleet Manager, City of Reno, Nevada (\$55,529- \$71,616 annually with pay for performance up to \$79,574). (Close Date: January 31, 2002)

The City of Reno, Nevada is accepting applications for the position of Fleet Manager for its fleet of 729 vehicles and equipment. There is an annual salary with pay for performance incentives. There is no State Income Tax and partial moving expenses may be paid. Close Date: January 31, 2002. For application, call Dio Shipp, Senior Management Analyst at (775) 334-2285, Fax (775) 334-2045 or email at shippd@ci.reno.nv.us. Or write: City of Reno, Department of Human Resources, P.O. Box 1900, Reno, NV 89505.

Ford Tests Diesel Focus in California

Ford said it has developed a prototype diesel-powered Focus that is designed to meet California emissions standards. The ULEV II Diesel Focus cuts the amount of oxides of nitrogen from the car by spraying urea into the exhaust before it goes into the catalytic converter. The prototype powertrain also uses a particulate trap in the exhaust system to cut down on soot particles. Ford will build several copies of the vehicles for testing. It has not decided on production plans. Ford says the car meets 2007 California standards that are 90% lower than current standards. *Source: Automotive News.*

San Diego Area Fleet Sees Results From B20 • Ethos

SAN DIEGO, CA— Pacific Waste Services announced that it will reduce more than 500 tons of pollution annually, far exceeding State emissions standards, by becoming the first fleet in the nation to use biodiesel and Ethos Fuel Reformulator (FR) as a new alternative fuel source. Pacific Waste Services made its decision after concluding a two-month pilot program in which the alternative fuel reduced emissions by 46 percent for the Chula Vista Division fleet. Pacific Waste Services also services areas in the City and County of San Diego. Sixty-two vehicles of the solid waste hauling company—including trash, yard waste, recycling and container transport trucks—now run on the new fuel. This new program, B20 • Ethos, consists of using B20, a mixture of 20% of World Energy's envirodiesel with 80% standard diesel, in combination with *Ethos FR*, a patented ester formula that works with any fuel to increase fuel economy and reduce emissions caused by internal combustion engines. The fleet is also the first in San Diego to use biodiesel, a diesel replacement derived from vegetable oil. The use of this combination not only exceeds state clean air standards, but also does not require costly engine conversions required by some alternative fuels. For information, contact Ana Cobian of Ethos Environmental at (619) 778-3808 or anacobian@ethosfr.com

Radical Alternative to Low Bid Vehicle Purchasing

(Continued from page 1)

primarily through user fees assessed to all County departments. The program established a self-perpetuating trust fund with the objective of fully funding all replacement vehicle purchases from FY00/01 and thereafter.

Low Bid Alternative Method of Heavy Equipment Acquisition

Capital outlay represents only 20% of the total cost of owning and operating equipment. PCFM felt making capital purchase decisions, often involving hundreds of thousands of dollars based on only 20% of the cost factor, was a flawed process. Reducing the County's overall ownership costs, beyond the purchase price, became PCFM's primary objective.

Through the Replacement Program, starting in October of 2000, Fleet Management controlled the vehicle acquisition process. Although low bid was the county's primary acquisition method, PCFM believed low bid, while a good method for procuring pencils, paper and paperclips, was a poor acquisition method for vehicles and equipment.

Fleet Management believed the low bid method neither promoted the best purchase decision nor produced the most effective use of taxpayer dollars.

PCFM believed the low bid method produced both negative operational and financial impacts far greater than the minimal benefit afforded by what was perceived to offer a level playing field for vendors. Further, PCFM believed the low bid method neither promoted the best purchase decision nor produced the most effective use of taxpayer dollars.

Because PCFM, under the Replacement Program, would control the vehicle acquisition process, PCFM proposed an alternative to the low bid process, starting with heavy equipment.

Criteria Based Vendor Selection

PCFM proposed using five criteria as an alternative to low bid vendor selection. The criteria was designed to reflect the most important elements of the entire ownership equation.

Prior to finalizing the criteria and making a formal proposal to the County Commission, PCFM met with local heavy equipment vendor representatives explaining how and why each criterion was selected. Vendors were offered the opportunity to question the process and to offer suggestions. This assured vendor affirmation of PCFM's proposal.

PCFM proposed using five criteria as an alternative to low bid vendor selection. The criteria was designed to reflect the most important elements of the entire ownership equation

As before, vendor bid submissions had to comply with the terms, conditions, and detailed equipment specifications to be considered in the selection process. Having passed through that gateway, bids were then evaluated on the following criteria, each of which received a numerical score:

Equipment Price

Based upon the capital cost of the equipment. The lowest price received the highest numerical score. The next lowest received the next highest score and so on.

Warranty Strength

Vendors are encouraged to provide the best and most extensive warranty possible. This affirms the vendor's confidence in the quality of their equipment. The County's objective is to purchase high quality equipment for which the vendor will provide maintenance related support, at no cost to the county, for as long as possible. The vendor offering the best warranty receives the highest score on this item.

Five Year Guaranteed Buy-Back

Vendors are asked to commit to repurchasing the equipment being offered after five years.

Vendors are asked to commit to repurchasing the equipment being offered after five years. While it's unlikely the County would dispose of the equipment after five years, this criterion represents the short term value of the equipment. While it provides the County a guaranteed price should they decide to downsize their fleet, the price offered by the vendor is likely to be optimistically higher which also is beneficial for the County. The highest buy-back price scores highest.

Cost per Hour

Using the Cost Reference Guide published by PRIMEMEDIA, PCFM adds the maintenance and operating costs per hour for each equipment make offered by the bidders. Using this publicly available measurement, PCFM can evaluate the O & M costs for each piece of equipment bid. The equipment with the lowest hourly costs receive the highest score.

10 Year Value

Using the Consumers Price Guide for Construction Equipment published by Con-

sumers Price Guide, PCFM includes the average sale price after 10 years of the equipment bid. This provides the County with a representation of how the equipment being bid will hold its value over 10 years. The highest 10 year value receives the highest score.

The criteria method was initiated in October 2000. Since then, several pieces of heavy equipment have been purchased and the bidder with the lowest price has yet to win a bid. PCFM feels vendor selection is more informed and will result in reducing overall equipment ownership costs.

Long Term Vehicle Purchase/Service Contract

PCFM's success in changing the heavy equipment acquisition process encouraged them to develop a unique and progressive alternative to purchasing on-highway vehicles.

Influenced by the technician shortage, PCFM sought ways in which to improve the working environment for their technicians. PCFM felt an opportunity existed by leveraging their annual purchases, expected to approximate 100 vehicles/year, to secure access to training, warranty, parts, and service information, similar to that of dealership personnel.

The dealer would 'wire' PCFM into their dealer/OEM network providing on-line, real time access to service, diagnostic, parts, training and to every other technical resource available to that dealer.

PCFM proposed establishing a multi-year contract with a local dealership which guaranteed that all vehicle purchases would be made from that dealership. In return, the dealer would 'wire' PCFM into their dealer/OEM network providing on-line, real time access to service, diagnostic, parts, training and to every other technical resource available to that dealer. Essentially, PCFM wanted to establish a county/dealer partnership in which PCFM's technicians had identical access, on site, as the dealership's technicians.

PCFM believed by providing their technicians access to OEM information resources would reduce diagnostic time and improve the quality of their repairs thereby reducing the County's overall ownership costs. This access would allow PCFM's technicians to become more computer literate, better trained, more knowledgeable in the nuances of computerized diagnostic procedures all of which would improve their self image and their opinion of their employer.

A contract was initiated in October 2000, and has enjoyed success far beyond PCFM's expectations.

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Headline Fleet News

A summary of world and national news stories of interest to fleet and transportation managers. The information is gathered from a variety of sources including the internet from the proceeding month.

Gas Pump Prices Drop Below \$1

Gasoline prices last month were below \$1 a gallon at some U.S. service stations despite heavy air strikes on Afghanistan and the risk of a disruption of oil exports from the Middle East.

The slide in pump prices is attributed to a decline in demand for fuel since the attacks that has allowed once razor-thin supplies to grow to back to normal levels, energy experts said.

People are less likely to take trips in times like this, and it's taking a toll on demand, said Geoff Sundstrom, spokesman for the American Automobile Association (AAA). This has helped rebuild national inventories.

The national average price has fallen 18 cents a gallon since the Sept. 11 suicide hijackings to \$1.35 a gallon, the lowest since the week of Feb. 2, 2000, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Thus far, none of the military strikes has significantly disrupted supply lines from the oil-rich Middle East to the United States, by far the world's largest oil and gasoline market.

The pump price plunge contrasts with the pockets of price gouging on Sept. 11 that saw some stations charging \$5 or more a gallon. The slide has been a bitter-sweet surprise for U.S. motorists who had been bracing for the jump in fuel prices that normally accompanies military conflict, particularly near the oil-rich countries of the Middle East.

Firestone Recalls More SUV Tires

Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. agreed to recall 3.5 million more Wilderness AT tires mounted on sport utility vehicles. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ordered the tire maker to replace the tires after a 1 1/2-year investigation.

The recall involves the P235/75R15 and P255/70R16 Wilderness AT tires manufactured before 1998 that were supplied as original equipment to Ford Motor Co. or sold as replacement tires for other SUV brands. Firestone says only about 768,000 of the tires are still on the market. Many of the tires have already been replaced by the owners or as part of a replacement plan announced in May by Ford.

"We do not agree with NHTSA's findings," Bridgestone/Firestone CEO John Lampe said in a statement. Our testing and science show our tires perform extremely well. However, we have decided that it is in the best interest of our company, our employees, our dealers and our customers if we replace the limited number of tires in question and close this chapter in the company's history.

Most of the tires are original equipment on the Ford Explorer and Mercury Mountaineer. The recall does not apply to other sizes of Wilderness AT tires or those supplied to other manufacturers as original equipment.

In a statement, NHTSA said those tires that are not involved have different design features and have not experienced as many tread separations. NHTSA has collected thousands of complaints involving Firestone tires. The agency announced that it has discovered 72 more fatalities connected to Firestone tire failures, raising the total to 203.

Twenty-five of those deaths and about 50 injuries involve the newly recalled tires. Last summer Bridgestone/Firestone rejected NHTSA's request to expand its original recall of 6.5 million ATX, ATX II and Wilderness AT tires, saying it was prepared to go to court to prove the tires were safe.

California News

"Next Generation" Natural Gas Truck Project Approved

SCAQMD approved three contracts to co-fund development and demonstration of ultra-clean medium- and heavy-duty trucks powered by natural gas. Board members approved two contracts with Cummins Westport of Vancouver, B.C., Canada, totaling \$778,715 to develop designs and market introduction strategies for ultra-clean medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, and for exhaust treatment technologies.

The Board also approved one contract with GFI Control Systems of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada for \$140,000 to demonstrate and evaluate exhaust treatment technologies.

These three projects will cost \$2.77 million, with the balance provided by the contractors and the California Energy Commission. The goal is to develop a new medium-duty compressed natural gas (CNG)-powered engine and a new heavy-duty LNG-powered engine by 2004 with significantly lower smog-forming emissions than current models. (The vehicles must have nitrogen oxide emissions at or below 0.5 grams/brake horsepower-hour. Current CNG engines emit about three times as much, and diesel engines emit even more.)

The contracts represent part of an overall program called the "Next Generation of Natural Gas Vehicles" sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, National Renewable Energy Laboratory. For more information, contact Mike Bogdanoff at (909) 396-3254.

SCAQMD Board Approves \$28.17 Million for Clean Air Projects

The region's air quality board approved a total of \$28.17 million in funding to help pay for more than 1,200 clean-fueled and lower-emission heavy-duty vehicles, fueling stations and other equipment in Southern California.

"These new vehicles and equipment will cut smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions by hundreds of tons per year," said Barry Wallerstein, executive officer for the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

"Some of the projects will help mitigate emissions from new power plants that are needed to generate additional electricity to ease the energy crisis."

Funding Approved from Three Sources

\$13.4 million from the Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Attainment Standards program, a statewide initiative to reduce smog-forming emissions from diesel engines;

\$8.4 million from SCAQMD's Rule 1309.1, Priority Reserve for propane-powered microturbines to replace portable diesel generators, low-sulfur diesel fuel for Metrolink locomotives and co-funding for up to 10 liquefied natural gas (LNG) fueling stations;

\$6.37 million from the State Emissions Mitigation Fund to replace diesel engines with lower-emission models in more than 150 construction vehicles and other equipment.

The Moyer projects will help pay for more than 1,000 clean-fueled and lower-emission vehicles and equipment, including 507 transit and shuttle buses; 285 delivery and refuse pickup trucks; and 273 other vehicles, including street sweepers and utility trucks.

The Moyer program, now in its third year, provides funding for the differential cost between a conventional diesel engine or vehicle and a clean-fueled or lower-emissions model. SCAQMD's Board this year has a total of \$21.25 million available for Moyer projects. The Board awarded \$3.52 million in July for natural gas fueling stations, fork lifts and other off-road vehicles. The Board will consider granting \$4.43 million later this year for marine and other projects.

SCAQMD's Rule 1309.1 — Priority Reserve Fund was created by the Board earlier this year to allow new and expanding power plants to purchase particulate (PM10) offset credits. Funds generated are to be used to reduce particulate emissions in the region.

The State Emissions Mitigation Fund was created for the purpose of mitigating excess nitrogen oxide and particulate emissions from peaking power plants. For more information, contact Chung Liu at (909) 396-2105.

California Governor Approves Three Additional Retirement Formulas

Governor Gray Davis signed Assembly Bill 616 which establishes three additional retirement benefit formulas, for local miscellaneous members of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and increases member contributions under those benefit formulas to 8 percent of compensation. The

bill does not provide mandatory benefits but leaves the issue to local collective bargaining. The formulas are 3 percent at age 60, 2.5 percent at age 55, and 2.7 percent at age 55. This bill also would provide those county agencies subject to the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937 ('37 Act), the option of providing those three retirement benefit formulas to general members (non-safety).

California Solvent Degreaser Rule Tightened

The South Coast Air Quality Management District amended Rule 1122 — Solvent Degreasers to further reduce smog-forming emissions and air toxics from manufacturing plants and repair facilities.

Such facilities that use solvent degreasers to clean parts before assembly will move to less polluting compounds or airless/air-tight systems that prevent evaporation of cleaning fluids.

The amendments will reduce emissions of smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOC) some 3.2 tons per day when fully effective in 2006. (The rule reduces the maximum VOC content of solvents used from 50 grams/liter to 25 grams/liter.)

The changes also will require use of airless/air-tight systems when using toxic solvents beginning in 2003, resulting in a toxic emissions reduction of 0.81 tons per day.

SCAQMD staff will perform a technology assessment in 2005 to reaffirm the feasibility of the 2006 VOC limit for vapor degreasers. For more information, contact Elaine Chang at (909) 396-3186.

CARB Standardizes Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) amended its Zero Emission Vehicle rule by standardizing electric vehicle charging equipment. CARB also updated the formula used to calculate each manufacturer's required number of ZEVs to reflect recent industry acquisitions and mergers.

Alan Lloyd, ARB Chairman said, "The move to standardize is an essential step in the growth of EV technology and is needed to provide certainty to the public and manufacturers. Also, the Board felt that because of its lower costs and durability conductive chargers offered the best option for the future, he added.

After public testimony from CARB staff, auto manufacturers and others, CARB approved the staff proposal to select the conductive charging system used by Ford, Honda and several other manufacturers, starting in 2006. As a result of this action, existing inductive chargers used for General Motors, Toyota and Nissan vehicles will continue to be operated and maintained, but probably will not be expanded.

CARB staff recommended the conductive systems because they are reliable, durable, less costly more amenable to future plans for putting power back on the grid.

According to staff estimates, conductive charging systems are likely to range in costs from \$700 to \$1400 whereas inductive charging units can range from \$1900 to \$3500. Staff also concluded that because most components of the conductive systems are onboard vehicle manufacturers will find it easier to improve the systems.

CARB also adopted a new formula for multi-manufacturer companies that determines the number of ZEVs, Advanced Technology ZEVs and PZEVs based on the total production of a manufacturer and any subsidiaries of which it has more than 50 percent control. For manufacturers such as Ford, owner of Jaguar and Volvo and a share of Mazda, and Volkswagen, which owns Rolls Royce and Lamborghini, this rule change will result in more ZEVs or advanced technology PZEVs (Partial Zero Emission Vehicles) being required.

Specifically, Ford will be required to build as many as 165 additional pure ZEVs and 953 Advanced Technology PZEVs at an estimated added cost of about \$2.6 million. Volkswagen, the only other company affected by the rule today, must build an additional 125 PZEVs at an estimated added cost of \$100,000.

ARB Chairman Alan Lloyd said, "Because of the many mergers and acquisitions that have occurred since 1990 when the ZEV rule was adopted, some adjustments in the requirements of each company had to be made. I think these changes will again allow manufacturers to compete on an even playing field."

School Districts to Get Clean-Powered Buses

The California Energy Commission announced that at least 52 school districts across California soon will get brand new low emission school buses to replace the old vehicles in their fleets. The Energy Commission has approved agreements it had signed earlier with these districts that took part in the Low Emission School Bus Program.

The agreements will allocate money from the program to the school districts, which in turn will buy the school buses fueled by either low-sulfur diesel or natural gas. In some cases, the Energy Commission will also assist in setting up natural gas fueling stations for the buses.

A total of 66 clean powered buses - 37 powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) three by liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and 26 by clean diesel - will be procured by districts from Shasta County to Imperial County.

"Amid the energy crisis, California is doing everything it can to reduce a school's power bills, whether for electricity or for bus fuel," said Energy Commission Chairman William A. Keese. "The great thing about these school buses is that they are also safer for children and cleaner for the environment."

In the 2000-2001 State budget, California provided \$50 million to the low emission program to continue the replacement or ret-

rofit of school buses to improve the health and safety of school children.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) is running the \$12.5 million retrofit program. The California Energy Commission will spend \$7.5 million for the 66 clean powered buses and some fueling stations for the school districts within the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District, Antelope Valley Air Pollution Control District, and the remaining air districts not specifically identified by the ARB to receive or administer their own school bus replacement funds.

The remainder of the program money, about \$30 million, will be managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District, and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District.

The idea is either to phase out or retrofit all aging buses throughout the State. More than 44 percent of school buses in California are older than 13 years, while 12 percent of the vehicles are more than 23 years old.

Best Fleet Management Practices

a regular feature

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE - INVENTORY OBSOLESCENCE

It is difficult enough to manage inventories that are needed, much less to keep track of inventory that is no longer necessary. It is important that the fleet be able to identify obsolete inventory and dispose of it. The sooner it is identified and dealt with, the higher the possible return from suppliers. Outsourcing of the parts inventory function has eliminated this problem for more and more fleets.

Reasons for Obsolescence: Technical obsolescence, lack of market demand or changes in the type of vehicles in the fleet, engineering changes, spoilage and defects.

Detecting Obsolescence: Use the fleet management system to identify the last time a part has been used or withdrawn from inventory. Reluctance of fleets and pack-rat mentality to admit inventory is obsolete and should be disposed of.

Strategy for Disposing of Inventory: Continuous review of inventory and disposition scheduled in small increments and on a regular basis, thus preventing large write-offs. It is possible to salvage some value from material disposition by sale to scrap dealers, resellers or manufacturers, or by donation to a charitable organization.

City of Lynchburg Fleet Services - a New Beginning

(Continued from page 1)

The City population is 65,269 and the population grows to 243,081 when the population of the five counties surrounding the City are included in the regional population base.

The economy of Lynchburg began with tobacco, expanded to include shoes and textiles and has evolved to a diverse industrial base. Today Lynchburg is home to cellular phone and radio systems makers (Ericsson), snack chips (Frito-lay), nuclear fuel (Babcock & Wilcox), publishing (R.R. Donnelley) and personal hygiene products (c.b. Fleet Company).

Lynchburg resides next door to Appomattox where the Civil War came to rest and thrives as a vibrant community even though the closest interstate (I-64) is 45 miles to the north. Four institutes of higher learning are located in the city. Government is managed by a seven member Council and a City Manager. The government serves citizens located over 50 square miles. The metropolitan service area is 1,802 square miles.



John McCorkhill, Director; Neal Hendricks, Technician; "Rock" Burch (Partially Hidden), Technician; Heather Irvine, Admin. Ass't; Ricky Adams, Technician; Christi Kessler, Fleet Accountant; George Dunn, Technician; Adam Davis, Technician; David Harris Facility Supervisor; Andy Clark, Technician; Jeff Curren, Technician

History of Fleet Services

Like many decentralized fleet operations, fleet funding was dependent on capital funding from year to year where departments competed for limited dollars in replacing fleet vehicles. Repairs were performed in an outdated facility built in the early 1960s that had poor lighting, ventilation and heating, lifts with insufficient capacity, minimal office space and inadequate staging areas.

Parts were stored in a separate building. Technicians actually left the garage and crossed a drive to get their parts. Inventory had built up over the years and obsolescence was a critical issue to be dealt with quickly.

The fleet management information system kept limited information and was not user friendly. Fuel usage accountability was weak and drivers could obtain fuel without using valid odometer readings.

In 1996 the City commissioned a consultant to take a "snapshot" of the City's fleet organization. Numerous areas were identified and brought to the City's attention for improvement. The remainder of this article details steps taken by the City to centralize and improve its fleet operation.

Centralized Fleet Management

No single-source centralized fleet authority existed within city government. Each agency was making its own fleet decisions and policy based on what was good for them and not for the City's fleet as a whole. The first recommendation made was to recruit a fleet director for the new centralized fleet department.



John McCorkhill, Fleet Director

After a one year recruiting campaign, the City appointed John McCorkhill as its new Fleet Director. McCorkhill previously served in Indianapolis for over 16 years with the last seven as its Director. While in Indianapolis, he managed the design and construction of two new maintenance facilities and several new fueling sites, implemented a new fleet management information system, downsized the fleet and led staff through a successful managed competition.

Establishment of a New Department

All fleet responsibility within the City of Lynchburg now falls under the centralized direction of a new City department called Fleet Services. Fleet Services is responsible for the establishment of fleet policy, repairs and maintenance, fuel site management, fleet inventory and general administration.

The Fleet Director receives general authority and guidance from a Board of Directors consisting of all department heads with substantial fleet requirements - Airport, Public Works, Public Safety (Police and Fire), Human Services, Finance and the City Managers Office. Service is performed in four facilities within the City: Fire, Waste Management, Schools and the central repair facility. Each are separate cost centers for budgeting, accountability and billing purposes.

Internal Services Fund

Prior to the formation of the new department a quasi-internal service fund had been in place. However, the fund failed to use a fully

burdened chargeback system and no effort was made to forecast the replacement of vehicles and the funding for these assets.

Labor rates contain an allocation of all shop related costs such as direct labor and benefits, utilities, uniforms, tools and other overhead items. Facility depreciation and an allocation of the amortization applicable to the new fleet management system are included in the labor rate making it easy to benchmark against vehicle repair rates charged locally.

A formalized vehicle replacement program is now in place that projects when a vehicle needs replacement. Unfortunately, several factors have delayed implementing the cost of replacement to the new internal services fund.

The first is the cost of backlog replacements accumulated over the years as the fleet aged and was not replaced. A \$10 million price tag was attached to the program. With a weakened economy and the cost of 200 year old infrastructure upgrades, vehicle replacements are being made in an accelerated but piecemeal fashion until more innovative financing is found.

New Maintenance Garage

A new central City maintenance facility was designed and constructed that has significantly improved repair efficiency and workflow. Four work processes formerly located in four different buildings were consolidated under one roof. Fleet administration, central city vehicle repairs, parts storage and small apparatus repairs are now co-located within one facility.

Construction for a \$2.6 million facility encompassing 23,934 square feet began in October 1999 with occupancy occurring in early 2001. The new garage has 13 work bays, two in-ground heavy truck lifts, a 7+ ton overhead crane, overhead lubrication reels, 16 foot overhead doors and a wash bay. General illumination alone increased from 15 foot candles in the old garage to 60 foot candles in the new one!

Parts Procurement and Management

One weakness in the repair operation was the ability to recruit capable parts personnel



Robert Riley, Parts Mgr. & "Butch" Blankenship, Parts Ass't.

(Continued on page 7)

City of Lynchburg Fleet Services - a New Beginning

(Continued from page 6)

in a small market area. The skills required are all too familiar to fleet managers: source a vast array of dissimilar parts; "turn" the inventory while minimizing carrying costs and obsolescence; and, maintain customer service and good rapport with repair technicians.

A decision was made to review outsourcing this function. A request for proposals (RFP) was issued in December 2000. Responses were received from three organizations, one a major corporation and another a local firm with an excellent reputation.

The City contracted with the local firm and started the project in March 2000. Results include improved parts turnaround time and decreased administrative and personnel costs. The contract also provides for performance bonuses or penalties based on time required to deliver a part to the customer. At the end of year one, the contractor exceeded the standards and earned a bonus for superior performance.

Fuel Program

Upon arrival, the new Fleet Director found the City's major fuel site boarded up since it failed to meet Federal EPA requirements pertaining to underground storage tanks (UST). A study was performed to determine the cost effectiveness of retaining in-house fueling sites or outsource the function. Results suggested that the City could be competitive in this area and a new fuel site was constructed.



Like the newly constructed maintenance facility, the new fueling facility was sited in a historical corridor and required special architectural design features to integrate into the neighborhood (see photo). The new fueling site opened in April 2001 and stores 40,000 gallons of fuel to accommodate a large portion of the City's 523 pieces of rolling stock. A state-of-the-art fuel management system which requires a key and employee ID to activate the system has markedly improved fuel accountability.

The next generation of fuel management systems is now coming onboard. To date, over 100 vehicles have been equipped with automotive information modules (AIM). The modules limit customer involvement to no more than pumping the fuel. Radio frequency communication activates the pump and the odometer reading is recorded by the AIM unit

and not by the vehicle operator. Thus, customer convenience and efficiency is maximized and input error minimized. These features have given the City of Lynchburg one of the most modern fuel management systems in the South.

Fleet Management Information System

Prior to acquiring a new modern fleet management system, Lynchburg was using mid-1980's technology that was antiquated. In October 1999, Fleet Services went "live" with a modern fleet management system. The Windows-based system increased storage capacity, seamless fuel management and financial management interfaces, automated PM scheduling and numerous other features needed to operate an effective fleet operation.

Modern Job Descriptions

Effective July 1, 1999, all job descriptions were consolidated into three new titles that require certain levels of ASE certification. The first level is Apprentice Technician requiring at least one ASE certification. The next level is Journey Technician that requires at least four certifications. The top position is Master Technician requiring at least one Master. The difference in pay between the apprentice and master technicians is \$2.40 per hour.

Employees who achieve additional certifications above the required levels earn an incentive of 10 cents per hour. In April 2001, Fleet Services was honored by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (NIASE) as a recipient of their Blue Seal of Excellence Award. The award is based on 100% of the City's technicians achieving certification. Additionally, the Facility Maintenance Supervisor achieved the Certified Equipment Manager (CEM) designation administered by the Equipment Maintenance Council.

Summary

This story of the City of Lynchburg describes the journey of one fleet organization's attempt to invigorate and renew its fleet management program. In 1999 City of Lynchburg Fleet Services was provided the opportunity to acquire the tools of modernization with the implementation of a new, centralized fleet management program. With



Administrative Group: Heather Irvine, Christi Kessler with David Harris Facility Supervisor

this opportunity comes a new level of responsibility in the form of cost containment, productivity, competitiveness and customer satisfaction. The staff at Fleet Services is up for the challenge as evidenced by the words of David Harris, Facility Maintenance Supervisor, "Through teamwork, empowerment and technician education, we can accomplish much more than ever seemed possible before, even what some may consider the impossible."

Editor's Note: For more information regarding the City of Lynchburg Fleet Services, contact John McCorkhill at (434) 847-1393 X 142 or e-mail to john.mccorkhill@lynchburgva.gov

Vehicle Costs

(Continued from page 1)

OR, UT, WA, WY) pay nearly as much, 52.0 cents per mile.

These costs are based on operating costs: fuel, oil, tires, maintenance; and ownership costs: insurance, depreciation, license & registration fees, taxes, and financing. It is assumed the vehicles are driven 15,000 miles per year and traded-in after four years.

The least expensive region of the U.S. to drive is the Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN) where it is only 49.4 cents to own and operate these same vehicles.

The national average, according to the Runzheimer calculations, is 51.2 cents per mile. The Mid-Atlantic states (DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA, WV) most nearly mirror the national average at 51.8 cents per mile.

"We often think of the rate established by the IRS as the national standard," says John McGrath, Runzheimer consultant and car cost expert. For 2001, the national per-mile rate that the U.S. taxpayer can deduct for non-reimbursable business driving expenses is 34.5 cents.

"There are significant differences," the vehicle cost expert notes. "The per-mile rate established for the AAA includes both vehicle taxes and finance expense, has different insurance assumptions, and is based on three size categories of vehicles rather than a national weighted average which includes all size categories of passenger vehicles. The IRS rate is intended to be a safe-harbor tax deduction for people who don't keep accurate expense receipts." *Editor's Note: For further information, contact Runzheimer International at www.runzheimer.com.*

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President George W. Bush, address to the nation



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(Continued from page 3)

Promoting employee retention is the first step in attacking the technician shortage.

Promoting employee retention is the first step in attacking the technician shortage. PCFM felt this program would help promote employee retention. PCFM structured a proposal which included:

- Preferential parts pricing, warranty terms, and service preference within the dealer's garage
- On line access to service, diagnostic, parts, training databases, in real time
- Technical training by dealership personnel

In return, PCFM would purchase 100% of their on-highway vehicles from this dealer that were available within the dealer resources (excluding specialty equipment such as fire and EMS vehicles).

Summary

A contract was initiated in October 2000, and has enjoyed success far beyond PCFM's expectations. In addition to the benefits mentioned above, vehicle orders are consolidated, eliminating considerable administrative effort; new vehicles are delivered in six months, or sooner affording early disposal of high maintenance vehicles further reducing the County's maintenance costs. This program also returned vehicle purchase transactions to a business located within the County, rather than from statewide sources in the previous practice. In addition to being politically beneficial, there have been many operational benefits for the County's fleet.

In summary, these two programs have reduced operating, maintenance and administrative costs, improved operational efficiency, been accepted by the marketplace, improved the working environment for technical staff, and been politically beneficial. All of the above have and will result in lower costs and more efficient service delivery for our taxpayers for years to come. *Editor's Note: Bob Stanton addressed last month's California State Fleet Management Conference, October 29-31, Sacramento, on this topic.*

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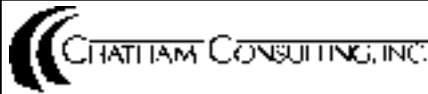
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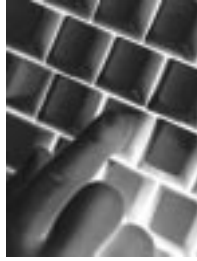
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Fees: The fee is \$295 per person (\$350 after October 5, 2001) and includes lunches, breaks and handouts. One-Day Registration is \$200. Pre-conference seminar is \$95. Payable by check or Visa and M.C. Make checks and Credit Cards payable to: **CALIFORNIA STATE FLEET MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE. Tax ID #95-3910975**

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