Grace School District Purchases Area's First Propane Autogas School Bus

Grace School District rolls out a Blue Bird school bus powered by a ROUSH CleanTech propane autogas fuel system.

GRACE, Idaho (PRWEB) April 13, 2016 -- Grace School District students stepped aboard the district's first school bus fueled by propane autogas today. This alternative fuel-powered school bus will lower the district's operating costs while reducing the impact the bus makes on the environment. The new Blue Bird Vision Propane school bus went into operation earlier this month.

"Our new propane school bus offers the economic and environmental benefits we are looking for with new technology that our district is excited to be a part of," said Lloyd Sorensen, Grace School District's transportation supervisor.

With other buses, on cold mornings, district transportation personnel are required to start buses early and let them idle excessively to ensure they are in driving condition for the first pick-up. The propane bus will eliminate the additional costs and time for this, since the propane autogas fuel system used in the Blue Bird Vision heats the bus quickly and provides unaided cold weather starts to -40 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Our Blue Bird Vision Propane bus saves both time and fuel costs in harsh climates," said Phil Horlock, president and CEO of Blue Bird. "The Grace School District community will have peace of mind knowing that their children will get to school on time with a bus that's fuel efficient, cleaner for the environment, and starts up easily at well below freezing temperatures."

The new Blue Bird bus is equipped with Ford Motor Company's 6.8L V10 engine powered by a ROUSH CleanTech propane autogas fuel system. Historically, propane autogas costs about half the price of diesel per gallon and reduces maintenance costs due to its clean-operating properties. Currently, Grace School District pays 89 cents per gallon for propane autogas compared with $2.10 per gallon for diesel.

The propane autogas bus, which is slated to run a 150-mile-per-day route, will reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by over 1,500 pounds and almost 32 pounds of particulate matter each year compared with the diesel bus it replaced. Propane autogas also reduces hydrocarbon emissions and virtually eliminates particulate matter, when compared with conventionally fueled school buses.

"Using propane autogas eliminates the need for costly diesel emissions equipment required on today's new diesel buses," said Brian Carney, group account director for ROUSH CleanTech. "Whether it's one bus or 100, no matter the size of the fleet, school districts are using propane autogas buses to significantly lower operating costs, maintenance costs and emissions."

Valley Wide Cooperative installed an onsite propane autogas fuel station with 500-gallon capacity for the school district. Installing a propane autogas station costs less than any other fueling station, including gasoline and diesel. Grace School District pays only $100 per year for the station.

About Blue Bird Corporation: Blue Bird is the leading independent designer and manufacturer of school buses, with more than 550,000 buses sold since its formation in 1927 and approximately 180,000 buses in operation

today. Blue Bird's longevity and reputation in the school bus industry have made it an iconic American brand. Blue Bird distinguishes itself from its principal competitors by its singular focus on the design, engineering, manufacture and sale of school buses and related parts. As the only manufacturer of chassis and body production specifically designed for school bus applications, Blue Bird is recognized as an industry leader for school bus innovation, safety, product quality/reliability/durability, operating costs and drivability. In addition, Blue Bird is the market leader in alternative fuel applications with its propane-powered and compressed natural gas-powered school buses. Blue Bird manufactures school buses at two facilities in Fort Valley, Georgia. Its Micro Bird joint venture operates a manufacturing facility in Drummondville, Quebec, Canada. Service and after-market parts are distributed from Blue Bird's parts distribution center located in Delaware, Ohio.

About ROUSH CleanTech: ROUSH CleanTech, an industry leader of alternative fuel vehicle technology, is a division of ROUSH Enterprises based in Livonia, Mich. ROUSH CleanTech designs, engineers, manufactures and installs propane autogas fuel system technology for light- and medium-duty Ford commercial vehicles, and Type A and Type C Blue Bird school buses. As a Ford QVM-certified alternative fuel vehicle manufacturer, ROUSH CleanTech delivers economical, clean and domestically produced fueling options for fleets across North America. Learn more at ROUSHcleantech.com or by calling 800.59.ROUSH.

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