



POSTAL NEWS

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Postal Service Explores Options for 'Green' Delivery Fleet

IRVINE, CA — The U.S. Postal Service plans to identify new, more environmentally friendly vehicle technologies that are less dependent on petroleum-based fuel sources to replace the 195,000 neighborhood delivery vehicles of its total 220,000 vehicles, the world's largest civilian fleet. Today's announcement came during a ceremony in which General Motors presented a Chevrolet Equinox Fuel Cell electric vehicle to the Postal Service for testing in a mail-delivery environment.

"We are looking for a vehicle that operates from a fuel source that reduces—or eliminates—our dependence on petroleum products, that is good for the environment, good for our customers and good for the Postal Service," said Walter O'Tormey, vice president, Engineering, as he accepted the keys to the Equinox Fuel Cell that will be tested in Irvine, CA.

Moving forward with non-petroleum fueled vehicles is more important to the Postal Service than ever, O'Tormey said, since a one-cent increase in a gallon of fuel adds \$8 million annually to Postal Service expenses. Fuel costs last year were \$1.7 billion and are expected to increase this year by \$600 million.

"The Postal Service has been an invaluable partner, and they put our fuel cell vehicles through some tough, daily workouts," said Mary Beth Stanek, director of energy and environmental policy & commercialization at General Motors. "We are gaining valuable insight on how these vehicles perform in demanding, real-world situations. By participating in Project Driveway, the Postal Service also is demonstrating the need to develop a hydrogen infrastructure to support fueling these vehicles."

A hydrogen fuel cell vehicle is twice as efficient as an internal combustion engine and is unique in that the fuel cell emits only water vapor which doesn't harm the environment. Hydrogen's greatest advantage as a fuel is that it can be made in many ways using both traditional and renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar and biomass energy.

“We are very encouraged by GM’s fuel cell technology,” O’Tormey added. “We also want to explore other options, such as hybrid electric, plug-in hybrid and other ‘green’ vehicles that will help us continue to provide our customers with reliable service while protecting the environment.”

The Postal Service leads the federal government in the number of alternate fuel vehicles it uses. More than 43,000 can operate on hybrid-electric, electric, compressed natural gas, liquid propane gas, ethanol (E-85), biodiesel and hydrogen fuel cell.

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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services, not tax dollars, to pay for operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenue of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world’s mail.