



# NEWS

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## **MTA BOARD APPROVES PURCHASE OF 98 MORE COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS POWERED BUSES**

The MTA Board of Directors March 22 approved the purchase of 98 more compressed natural gas-powered buses in keeping with its policy to buy only alternatively-fueled buses in the future.

By purchasing the buses manufactured by Neoplan USA Corporation at a cost of \$33.4 million, the MTA Board exercised an option placed into an earlier contract with Neoplan in which the MTA purchased 196 CNG buses in July, 1994.

"These new buses are needed to improve our bus system by replacing 15-year-old diesel buses that are no longer cost-effective to operate or maintain," said L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, MTA's chairman. "We expect to begin receiving our first new CNG buses in the next few weeks."

The CNG buses are well below the national standards in all emissions categories, including particulates. In addition to helping improve Los Angeles County's air quality, the new buses will feature numerous design changes, said MTA Chief Executive Officer Franklin White.

"The new buses will include a brighter interior that features light gray upholstery and flooring, stainless steel seating similar to that on the Blue Line trains, plus a special protective coating that makes graffiti and vandalism removal easier," White noted.

(MORE)

## **CNG BUSES**

Page 2

To assist the MTA with its compressed natural gas program, the Southern California Gas Company is providing three technicians to operate MTA's three CNG fueling facilities during the first year of operation. The technicians will help facilitate fueling station procurement and installation.

"MTA's action to replace 98 diesel buses with clean-burning natural gas-powered buses will mean the avoidance of 150 tons of pollution annually going into the air we breathe," said John Weber, manager of transportation at Southern California Gas Company. "At the same time, MTA will be helping to reduce our country's reliance on foreign oil by powering their vehicles with safe, economical and domestically produced natural gas."

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