



NEWS

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CONTACT: MARY ANN MASKERY/
JIM SMART
MTA MEDIA RELATIONS
(213) 922-2736/922-2700
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MTA HONORS EARTH DAY ... ALL YEAR LONG

Long before it became trendy, the MTA made a commitment to a clean environment.

It goes beyond the obvious – the largest alternative fuel bus fleet in the country – and extends to the way the MTA maintains and operates the buses and trains.

"We at MTA are proud of our record on the environment," said MTA Chairman Larry Zarian. "We are the first transit agency in the nation to pledge ourselves to purchase only alternative fuel buses, and our innovations in recycling not only protect the environment, they save us money."

MTA's recycling effort is extensive.

"We list 27 separate hazardous materials for special handling, and the majority of these are either recycled or put to other useful purposes," said Interim MTA CEO Linda Bohlinger. "We recycle more than 50,000 gallons of antifreeze each year. We send it out for reprocessing, it comes back to us, and we use the same antifreeze again."

Since 1992, the MTA has experimented with synthetic transmission fluid in 10 buses that operate in the downtown area. The results are promising. The synthetic fluid has tended to last for the service life of the transmission, about 150,000 to 200,000 miles. What is more, it is recyclable, and appears to extend the life of the transmission.

The test with synthetic transmission fluid is being extended to 200 buses.

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Other items that lend themselves to recycling include used oil filters. The old filters are crushed to recoup the oil that has been absorbed in the filter material. The waste oil is re-refined into lubricants and marine bunker fuel, and the filter itself is melted down to make steel rebar.

The MTA also funds a number of environmentally friendly projects. Prominent among them, 400 miles of bicycle routes in Los Angeles County.

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