

ARKANSAS ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT



Driving Arkansas Transit to a Greener Future: Empowering Sustainable Mobility

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ROCK REGION METRO'S ELECTRIFYING FLEET: INTRODUCING THE NEW EV TRANSIT BUSES

On June 13, a momentous occasion took place as Rock Region METRO proudly revealed five cutting-edge EV transit buses at a special event. These five new EV transit buses will be replacing the last of the agency's diesel engines, making this a major milestone for the agency as they successfully completed their transition to a fully alternative fuel fleet. "The Rock Region METRO team is proud to contribute to a more sustainable future by operating Arkansas's first electric mass transit buses," said Justin Avery, Rock Region METRO chief executive officer.

As the new electric buses join the fleet, the initial months of operation will be crucial in assessing and fine-tuning the charging management system. Various factors can influence the maximum operation range of these electric buses, and meticulous evaluation during this phase will help ensure their optimal performance and efficiency. With an impressive operating range of 220 to 340 miles and the requirement of 738 kWh of power, these eco-friendly buses promise to deliver reliable and sustainable transportation options to the community.

Rock Region METRO has carefully strategized the deployment of these battery electric buses, with a focus on specific routes that align with their sustainability goals. The chosen routes include 3 Baptist Medical Center, 5 West Markham, 8 Rodney Parham, 10 McCain Mall, 14 Rosedale, 22 University Ave./Mabelvale, and 23 Baseline/Southwest. Notably, these seven routes are among the fifteen fixed routes operated by the agency that can accommodate a 40-foot-long vehicle.

"As the state's largest public transit agency, serving Arkansas's urban core, we are accustomed to being the agency taking on new learning curves, and our foray into electric buses is no different from other METRO 'firsts' in that respect," said Justin Avery. By leading the way in adopting electric mass transit buses, the agency sets a precedent for other transit systems to follow suit and drives the entire state toward a more sustainable and environmentally responsible future.

EMPOWERING SCHOOLS FOR A GREENER FUTURE

On June 20, Barrett Hunnicutt, co-director of Arkansas Clean Cities, delivered a presentation at the Arkansas Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation workshop held in Hot Springs. The workshop provided an opportunity for school districts from all over the state to gather knowledge about alternative fuels, the cost-saving advantages of operating an alternative fuel fleet, and the maintenance aspects compared to traditional buses.

During the presentation, Hunnicutt specifically highlighted the Go Red! Program, which is facilitated through the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment, Division of Environmental Quality. This program serves as a valuable example of funding opportunities that schools can explore to secure additional funds while transitioning to alternative fuels.

To learn more about the Go Red! Program visit www.adeq.state.ar.us/air/planning/gored.

NEWS & EVENTS

2023 UPDATES: Alternative Fuel Life-Cycle Environmental and Economic Transportation
AUG. 9 | 2-3 P.M. ET

Register at: <https://nrel.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltcu6gqz4jEkBnVbpbQuuXtCBZNoKWjpU>

Green Transportation Summit and Expo
AUG. 22-24 | TACOMA, WASHINGTON

Register at: www.gtsummitexpo.com/event-details

This newsletter is a monthly feature of the Arkansas Clean Cities Coalition whose focus is alternative fuels and vehicles, advanced technology, efficient vehicles, greater use of mass transit systems, trip elimination measures, and other congestion mitigation approaches.