

CASE STUDY: YELLOW CAB OF COLUMBUS

BACKGROUND

Yellow Cab of Columbus is a taxi transportation service based in central Ohio. Because of the high mileage accrued by their 128 fleet vehicles, the company began looking for a cost-effective fuel that burned cleaner than gasoline, without sacrificing performance.

President Jeff Kates and his team ultimately decided to adopt propane autogas, which costs an average of \$1 less per gallon than gasoline, produces fewer harmful emissions and is more economically viable to implement than many other alternative fuel options on the market. Kates turned to the complete program through Alliance AutoGas to ensure the success of the company's alternative fuel initiative.

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

Yellow Cab of Columbus has converted 25 Ford Crown Victorias out of their 128 taxicab vehicles to run on autogas, partly through a grant from the Department-of-Energy-funded organization Clean Fuels Ohio. The conversions utilize the bi-fuel Prins VSI system from Alliance AutoGas co-founding partner American Alternative Fuel. American Alternative Fuel also trained Yellow Cab of Columbus' in-house technicians to perform the certified autogas vehicle conversions.

"Doing our part for the environment, reducing dependence on foreign fuel, and equipping our shop employees with green technology skills were all significant factors in our decision to use autogas," said Kates. Kates and his team place a high value on continuing education for employees. The ability to equip in-house technicians with alternative fuel expertise is good for job retention and was a significant benefit of working with Alliance.

WORKING WITH ALLIANCE AUTOGAS

The Alliance AutoGas complete program was an ideal fit for Yellow Cab of Columbus because it offered a comprehensive solution for the company's conversion, infrastructure, and fueling needs. Through its partner network of companies nationwide, Alliance AutoGas provided the autogas conversion systems, onsite fueling, extensive training and ongoing program support. Alliance also helped Yellow Cab of Columbus secure the Clean Cities of Ohio grant to partially fund their conversion program.

Vehicle conversions were performed in-house by Yellow Cab of Columbus with training from American Alternative Fuel, and autogas was supplied through a contract with Alliance AutoGas co-founding partner Blossman Gas, Inc. The onsite autogas station at Yellow Cab of Columbus provides drivers with a central and easily accessible refueling location. The station features two 1,000 gallon tanks, installed at no additional cost to Yellow Cab of Columbus.

"The great part about working with Alliance AutoGas is that they have quarterbacked the whole process from the permitting, to the fueling infrastructure that was built on-site, to the coordination of the conversion kits, and even setting us up to receive the Clean Cities of Ohio grant," said Kates. "They took care of everything, which made the entire conversion process manageable."



Jeff Kates
President
Columbus, OH

FLEET STATISTICS

FLEET TYPE: Taxicab Company

PERCENT OF FLEET RUNNING ON AUTOGAS: 20%

AUTOGAS VEHICLES IN FLEET: 25

ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS: \$50,000 in fuel cost savings

ANNUAL USAGE (gallons of gasoline displaced): 72,000 gallons

ANNUAL MILEAGE (per vehicle): 55,000

AUTOGAS FUELING: Onsite autogas fueling infrastructure, including two 1,000-gallon tanks

TIME OPERATING ON AUTOGAS: 1.5 years

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RESULTS AND AUTOGAS BENEFITS

By switching to autogas, Yellow Cab of Columbus yielded immediate economic and environmental benefits and solidified their reputation as a responsible and forward-thinking company. Drivers have been impressed with both the savings at the pump and the vehicles' performance, which they say is nearly identical to their previous gasoline vehicles.

"The drivers definitely notice the improved performance of the vehicles and the substantial fuel cost savings," said Kates, who reports the autogas cabs will provide an annual fuel savings of about 25 percent compared to gasoline vehicles. Since autogas is a cleaner burning fuel than gasoline, the autogas cabs also require fewer oil changes and less maintenance work, which helps raise the drivers' bottom line.

Yellow Cab of Columbus drivers are independent contractors, so autogas provides cost benefits for drivers and customers alike. And since 90 percent of the U.S. autogas supply is made in America, Yellow Cab of Columbus is supporting national energy security and reducing our nation's dependence on imported oil by running their fleet on autogas.

Environmental stewardship was a top priority for Yellow Cab of Columbus when choosing an alternative fuel; and with their new autogas vehicles, the fleet will produce approximately 20 percent fewer harmful pollutants than before. By driving clean with autogas, Yellow Cab of Columbus is doing their part to protect the environment and improve air quality, while communicating to customers a commitment to corporate responsibility.

MOVING FORWARD

Yellow Cab of Columbus has expressed a significant interest in increasing the use of clean autogas fuel in their fleet and helping to expand autogas adoption in the transportation sector at large. The company is extremely pleased with the return on investment from the autogas conversions and is sharing their results with fellow industry professionals through the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association (TLPA).

Yellow Cab of Columbus is dedicated to being environmentally friendly, enhancing U.S. energy security and fostering employee expertise in green technology through the use of propane autogas-powered vehicles.

"We are feeling very positive about the future of our autogas program and the difference it will make in attracting new customers," said Kates. "Beyond the fuel costs savings we can now pass on to our drivers, we are committed to doing our part to clean up Ohio's air and to support domestic interests with American-made autogas."