

## CNG a Natural for Tulsa Public Schools

Tulsa is the second-largest city in Oklahoma (second only to Oklahoma City). Incorporated in 1898, Tulsa lies in the heart of “Green Country,” a fertile forested region of rolling hills in northeastern Oklahoma. Tulsa boasts of low unemployment, with an economy based on telecommunications, manufacturing, aerospace, transportation and energy. Almost 400,000 people live within the City of Tulsa, and over 800,000 people live in the metropolitan Tulsa area.



Tulsa is centrally located as one of the main population centers in Oklahoma

According to the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, Tulsa ranked in the top one-third of all MSAs, states and countries worldwide in total gross product in 2001, with a gross production of goods and services of \$29.24 billion—and the forecast for 2003 was for over a half a billion dollars in growth. Tourism is a key factor in the city’s success as well. Tulsa was ranked in the top 10 southern cities in Southern Living magazine and Fodor’s Travel Publications listed Tulsa as one of its outstanding travel destinations.

The Tulsa Public Schools, the largest school district in the State of Oklahoma, serves over 40,000 students in a 173 square mile four-county area (Tulsa, Wagoner, Osage, and Creek counties). Most of the students (80 percent) live within the Tulsa city limits. The district has a total of fifty-seven elementary schools, fifteen

middle schools, and nine high schools. The district transports these 40,000 students using only 4.6% of its total operating budget.

The Clean Cities program in Tulsa has been in place since 1997. In 2002, the program was honored by the Keep Oklahoma Beautiful’s statewide environmental excellence program with an Environmental Improvement Award for non-profit organizations with budgets less than \$100,000.

### Alternative Fuel School Bus Activities in Tulsa

In 1988, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce asked the Tulsa Public Schools to participate in a two-year pilot program to test the viability of alternative fuels. As a result, the Tulsa Public Schools converted 24 school buses to natural gas power. Tulsa Public Schools continued to convert buses after the pilot period ended, and they were assisted in this regard by several successful bond issues and zero-interest loans from the State of Oklahoma.

When conversion costs for the buses exceeded the limits of the state zero-interest loan program, Oklahoma Natural Gas (ONG), the local gas utility, partnered with Tulsa Public Schools to continue the CNG program at the schools. This resulted in another 40 buses and 30 trucks being added to the natural gas fleet at Tulsa through a leasing program with ONG. The school system is also leasing 13 natural gas cars which are used for driver training.

At present, the Tulsa Public Schools natural gas fleet consists of 190 dedicated CNG vehicles. The loans and equipment costs for these vehicles are being funded through the savings the Tulsa Public Schools are seeing through the use of natural gas rather than gasoline or diesel. The school system typically uses the equivalent of 26,000 gallons of gasoline and 29,000 gallons of diesel fuel per month.



## For More Information

For more information on Tulsa's alternative fuel school bus activities, please contact:

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The Tulsa Clean Cities can be found at:  
<http://www.tulsacleancities.com>

Tulsa Public Schools information is available at:  
<http://www.tulsaschools.org>

The price differential between natural gas and gasoline is about 29 cents per gallon, which adds up to significant fuel cost savings for the schools. Overall savings average an estimated \$300-\$500 per vehicle per year.

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