

New COTA buses roll into service in central Ohio

COTA adds 38 new CNG buses to its fleet in 2015

COLUMBUS—Have you noticed that “new bus” smell on your commute recently? The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) has purchased five new 35 foot coaches and 33 new 40 foot coaches, all powered by Compressed Natural Gas (CNG).

In 2013, COTA began phasing diesel-powered vehicles out of its fleet and all new buses acquired are powered by CNG. COTA now operates 104 CNG buses out of a fleet of 350 active fixed-route buses. The transition of the entire fleet is expected to be complete by 2025. This commitment, based on both environmental and economic factors, will result in air quality improvements in central Ohio and a substantial reduction in operating fuel costs. In the first two years of CNG operation, COTA has saved more than \$1.5 million in fuel costs.



COTA's 2015 buses include a variety of new features that enhance safety and comfort for passengers, operators and other vehicles on the road:

- LED low beam headlights for enhanced visibility to other vehicles on the road
- An LED stop sign on the rear of the bus for enhanced visibility to other vehicles on the road
- Two rear centered round stop lights replaced with four strip stop lights for enhanced visibility to other vehicles on the road
- Fiberglass seats that are more attractive and easier to maintain
- An additional security camera inside the bus to enhance safety

“COTA is committed to maintaining a clean, safe and environmentally-friendly fleet for our riders,” said Clinton Forbes, COTA Vice President of Operations. “We’re proud of this investment in our community and in the environment.”

COTA replaces one-twelfth of its fleet each year, based on the average 12-year life span of a bus. COTA's average fleet age is 4.7 years, compared to the national average of 7.8 years (based on 2013 data).

COTA's new CNG buses are manufactured by GILLIG, and were built in Hayward, CA. Each bus is driven from California to COTA's McKinley Operations Facility. Once a coach is delivered, COTA's Vehicle Maintenance staff performs the following: pre-service inspection; CNG tank inspection; farebox installation; radio testing setup; Automatic Passenger Counter test certification; air conditioning in-service inspection; and a premium clean.

Do you know how to identify a 2015 bus? Each bus in COTA's fleet receives a four-digit number. The first two digits identify the year the bus was purchased. The first two digits of a 2015 bus are “15.” The first two digits of a 2005 bus are “25.” The second two digits designate the order in which the buses were produced. The second two digits for the first 2015 bus to come off of the line in California are “01.”

