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[Home](#) > MTS Continues Building Clean Air Fleet With Retirement of Last Diesel Buses and Adds More Electric Buses

Monday, March 1, 2021

San Diego – The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) hit a major clean-air milestone today by officially retiring the last of its diesel buses and adding two more electric buses to its fleet. The agency has a long history of adopting clean fuel technology and is on a path to convert its entire bus fleet to zero emissions by 2040.

“MTS retiring the last of its diesel buses from its fixed-route fleet is a monumental leap forward in air quality,” said Nathan Fletcher, MTS Board Chair and Chair, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. “It represents our commitment to environmental justice, sustainability, air quality and to being one of the leaders nationally in achieving these ambitious environmental standards.”

Replacing the last diesel buses will be 24 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) express commuter buses built by Motor Coach Industries (MCI) – one of the world’s largest independent global bus manufacturers. “Not only do the new MCI CNG buses offer an improved riding experience for our customers, we get substantially better air quality results from them as well,” said Sharon Cooney, MTS Chief Executive Officer. “There will be a 100% reduction in particulate matter, and a 98% reduction in NOx emissions over the diesel counterparts.”

The new express commuter buses will offer 57 comfortable forward facing seats, are designed for highway speeds, and offer touring class comfort and safety. The vehicles will operate out of MTS’ East County Division in El Cajon, serving passengers on the [Rapid Express 280](#) (Escondido-Downtown San Diego) and [Rapid Express 290](#) (Rancho Bernardo-Downtown San Diego).

“For nearly three decades we’ve led the transition to CNG propulsion, having delivered nearly 14,000 CNG buses and coaches across North America. Today, we’re proud to support the San Diego MTS in achieving this low-emission milestone. With clean, safe, and readily scalable technology, CNG emits significantly less nitrogen oxide than diesel engines – lending immediate impact on improving air quality,” said Chris Stoddart, President, New Flyer and MCI. “MTS has long pioneered sustainable mobility, having been the first agency in America to adopt CNG into its fleet nearly 20 years ago. Congratulations on yet another leap forward to cleaner air, sustainable transit, and more livable communities.”

At the same time as retiring the diesel fleet, MTS also added two [GILLIG zero-emission battery electric buses](#), upping the agency’s total to eight. MTS began its [zero-emission bus pilot program in 2017](#), and intends to complete a full transition to 100% zero emissions fixed-route vehicles by 2040. The two California-made GILLIG buses are the first of seven to be delivered to MTS. GILLIG’s zero-emission battery electric buses are equipped with the state-of-the-art Cummins electrified powertrain and are supported by a nationwide service network. Built on GILLIG’s

proven Low Floor platform, the buses ensure parts and training commonality with MTS's existing GILLIG fleet. Equipped with six onboard batteries, each bus has a battery capacity of 444 kWh, providing an estimated range of 140 miles. The buses utilize energy recovered from a regenerative braking system and feature a direct-drive traction motor with peak torque of 3500 Nm (2,582 lbs.-ft.).

"We are excited to partner with the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System as they work towards their Innovative Clean Transit goal of a 100 percent zero-emission fleet by 2040," said Bill Fay, GILLIG Vice President of Sales. "The new battery-electric buses support MTS's commitment to excellent service and cleaner air for the communities they serve, and GILLIG is proud to be a part of this step forward."

Other milestones in MTS' efforts to improve air quality through its fleet:

Embarking on a path towards full zero-emissions by the year 2040 or sooner.

Becoming one of the first transit agencies in the U.S. to move to a CNG bus fleet in the early 2000s.

Using a renewable form of natural gas sourced from waste to fuel its entire fleet of 40, 45 and 60-foot fixed-route buses.

Operating a Trolley fleet running on 100% electricity derived from sustainable sources in FY 2020.

Transitioned to eco-friendly propane gas for its minibus and paratransit fleet, reducing emissions by nearly 3 million pounds per year

Installed 500 solar-power bus shelters

Built two new LEED-certified bus operations and maintenance facilities in El Cajon and Chula Vista

About MTS

MTS continues to operate 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines. Frequencies and spans have been restored to near-pre-COVID-19 levels. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. MTS asks that that people wear face coverings at all times and practice physical distancing when possible.

About MCI

MCI, a subsidiary of NFI Group Inc., is North America's leading public and private market motor coach brand, building the J4500 (an industry best-seller for over a decade), the 35-foot J3500 model, and the workhorse D-Series including the ADA-accessible MCI D45 CRT LE Commuter Coach, including the battery-electric, zero-emission D45 CRTe LE. MCI also provides maintenance, repair, 24-hour roadside assistance, parts, and technician training through the industry's only Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) accredited MCI Academy.

MCI has been leading innovation in mobility for 90 years and today supports North American cities with sustainable coaches, technology, and infrastructure. Together with New Flyer, MCI also operates the Vehicle Innovation Center, the first and only innovation lab of its kind dedicated to advancing bus and coach technology and providing workforce development through electric bus training, now available online.

About GILLIG LLC

GILLIG is the leading manufacturer of heavy-duty transit buses in the United States. We offer a portfolio of clean energy propulsions including zero-emission battery electric, diesel-electric hybrid, near-zero emission compressed natural gas and clean-diesel, all designed on the proven GILLIG Low Floor platform to maximize fleet commonality. Since 1890, our dedicated employees have been supporting customers and delivering on promises to improve quality of life through transformative mass transit solutions. From initial design through final assembly, each GILLIG bus is designed and built by American workers in Livermore, California, who are committed to building and supporting the safest and most reliable transit buses in the United States. GILLIG buses are known for their unmatched quality and have earned their reputation as the lowest-cost buses to maintain and operate. Our products help reduce congestion, contribute to a cleaner environment and provide mobility to all. GILLIG is also proud to create American jobs and recycle tax dollars back into the community to further support public transportation. Further information about GILLIG can be found at www.gillig.com.

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News Category:
San Diego

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