



ENERGY VISION 138 EAST 13TH STREET NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003

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Actor Blythe Danner, Energy Vision President Joanna Underwood, NYC Environmental, Community & Energy Activists and “Green” Entrepreneurs Unveil New Natural Gas Garbage Trucks @ Union Square Event; Energy Vision Report Reveals These Trucks Put New York City on the Path to Healthier Air, Lower Asthma Rates, Reduced Greenhouse Gases, and Energy Independence

New York, New York: Actor and environmental activist Blythe Danner today joined an impressive gathering of business people, politicians, environmentalists, and community activists to celebrate and praise, of all things, garbage trucks. The two brand new natural gas-powered trucks and the natural gas sweeper unveiled today in Union Square stood as the unlikely symbols of New York City’s push to rid its air of hazardous pollutants.

The heavily attended event was organized by **Energy Vision**--a national non-profit organization that studies and promotes the benefits of clean, renewable petroleum-free transportation fuels. The objective was to raise public awareness of the strides being made locally towards replacing diesel-powered garbage trucks with state-of-the-art natural gas-powered trucks. The guests of honor were representatives of the Township of Smithtown on Long Island, two major privately-owned refuse and recycling companies and the NYC Department of Sanitation. In the last year, acting independently, Smithtown, Filco Carting Corporation, Metropolitan Paper Recycling Company and DSNY committed to put 38 new natural gas trucks into operation. Twenty eight are now in service.

As revealed in a new report released by Energy Vision today, entitled, *Fueling a Greener Future: NYC Metropolitan Region Garbage Fleets Commit to Alternative Fuels*, this important step forward involves a strategy that – if implemented widely – could contribute greatly to achieving Mayor Bloomberg’s goal of making this a healthy and sustainable city by 2030.

“It’s not often that garbage trucks are at the center of an environmental good news story,” said Joanna Underwood, President of Energy Vision. The 6,000 diesel refuse and recycling trucks on NYC streets have been a major source of air pollution. But these trucks here today and the growing fleet of new natural gas trucks are blazing a ‘path to the future.’ Within a few years use of natural gas trucks could become the industry norm in New York City.

Because of just the 38 natural gas trucks put on the streets of our region as a result of the four initiatives highlighted today, New Yorkers will be spared the health risks,

involving asthma, other respiratory illnesses and cancers associated with more than 124 tons a year of airborne particulates (soot) and smog-forming nitrogen oxides. Were half of the diesel refuse collection and recycling trucks operating in New York City traded in for natural gas models “more than 16,000 tons of pollutants would be eliminated a year, while reliance on a clean domestic fuel would eliminate the need for 23 million gallons a year of petroleum-based diesel fuel, which is getting more expensive by the day and relies on imported oil.”

“Diesel fuel was a valuable contributor to this country’s expanding transportation systems in the 20th century. But this high carbon petroleum-based fuel is a dead end path today. We must get on the path to use of clean and renewable fuels,” stated Ms. Underwood. “Once fleets are equipped to use a gas, rather than a liquid, fuel, they are poised to move to even cleaner and renewable fuels going forward: biomethane, a clean renewable fuel made using the gases from landfill and other organic wastes, hythane, a blend of natural gas and hydrogen, and ultimately hydrogen.

“The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) pioneered in developing the nation's first compressed natural gas refuse trucks over tens years ago, and there were many challenges.” said Rocco DiRico, Assistant Commissioner, Support Services, NYC Department of Sanitation. “But we have explored the new generation of CNG engines, have used natural gas street sweepers which perform well, and we look forward to evaluating the improved ‘fourth generation’ trucks.”

Dr. Patrick Kinney from the Columbia School of Public Health, spoke about the impact of diesel emissions on the City’s asthma rate. “Three quarters of a million New Yorkers are at risk for asthma,” he said. “That statistic is confirmed by the 2007 American Lung Association’s ‘State of the Air’ Report. And, of course, children are disproportionately impacted. These natural gas garbage trucks will help reduce emissions and, hopefully, the high rate of asthma in some of our communities,” he added.

The report was enthusiastically applauded by Miquela Craytor, Deputy Director of Sustainable South Bronx, an organization at the forefront of advocating and implementing solutions to reduce the levels of harmful emissions that have been linked to the city’s high asthma rates among other health conditions. “We must find innovative ways to address the disproportionate impacts of our current global warming practices. Low income communities and communities of color are the main receptors for diesel truck toxins. These communities are overwhelmingly affected by industries that are heavily truck-dependent. This leads to disproportionate impacts on health and low education levels as compared to other communities,” said Ms. Craytor. “It’s important to implement ways to reduce these toxins for everyone. We must find ways to stop toxins from making their way into the lungs of every man, woman, and child” she added.

Domenic Monopoli, the owner of Filco Carting Corp., which along with Metropolitan Paper Recycling Company, was heralded as a “green leader” in New York City, made a very straightforward case. “The normal diesel trucks are just not good for the environment,” he said. “Filco bought its first three natural gas truck in late 2007. They are cutting edge. They generate very little noise and emit minimal emissions. Our company has already budgeted eight more trucks for 2008 and 2009.”

It may seem hard to make a strong case for swapping diesel trucks, polluting and noisy as they are, for comparable vehicles that cost between \$50,000 and \$70,000 more, but Gregory Bianco, CEO of Metropolitan Paper Recycling, did just that. “Since Metropolitan Recycling is one of the premier recycling companies in NYC, we felt it was our responsibility to the communities we serve and the children of New York City to use the least polluting technologies. We found natural gas trucks to be the best, and I am proud to be here showing off one of these trucks.” He added, “The good news has been that since we bought our trucks, with rising diesel prices, we are actually saving money. We will have a total of 11 CNG trucks by mid-2009. ”

Russell K. Barnett, Director for Environment & Waterways for Smithtown also had good economic and environmental news to report. “Fifteen months ago,” he said, “our Township launched the first 100% natural gas-fueled refuse and recycling fleet on the East Coast. After taking a hard look at the instability of the world oil market, the ever increasing price of petroleum diesel fuel, and the environmental advantages of natural gas; the choice was clear. Now we’ve got 22 cleaner quieter trucks; we have a more secure fuel, we’re saving money, and service and reliability have never been better!”

“With diesel fuel prices soaring, Energy Vision calculates a collective \$330,000 in annual fuel savings for the operators of these 38 natural gas trucks” said Underwood. She added: “However, were half of the refuse and recycling trucks in NYC shifted to natural gas, the annual fuel savings would be \$30 million or more – a big help for a city that is tightening its belt.”

“This past year,” said Ms. Underwood, “New York City’s leaders have written a critical blueprint for making this City a healthy and sustainable one by 2030, and Mayor Bloomberg has signed on with the Mayor’s Climate Protection Group. The initiatives taken that we are highlighting today and the vehicles you see here are clear evidence that the shift of refuse and recycling trucks to natural gas is one immediately feasible strategy for getting on a successful path toward achieving the City’s goals. Accelerating this shift is now the challenge, and we look to the Mayor and the City Council to take a leadership role in developing such incentives, ranging from supporting the education of waste haulers about the benefits of putting their fleets on the path to a clean fuels future to developing economic incentives for such change.”

Ms. Danner, who took a brief tour in one of the new vehicles, remarked, “It is amazing that, for reducing air pollution, taking one old diesel truck off the streets is like removing 325 cars! Every child exposed to the new natural gas trucks will be a healthier child, and, by our becoming less oil dependent, every child will have a better chance for a secure future.”

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Copies of Energy Vision’s Report, “Fueling a Greener Future: NYC Metropolitan Region Garbage Fleets Commit to Alternative Fuels,” is available by contacting LCG Communications (above) or by visiting the Energy Vision website: www.energy-vision.org