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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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January 27, 2003

Biodiesel Beats the Cold

Coldest Spots in the Country Succeed with Biodiesel Even at Subzero Temperatures

Jefferson City, Missouri— Biodiesel users nationwide demonstrate that the alternative fuel has proven reliable even during the most severe of cold spells, disproving myths about the cleaner burning fuel's performance in cold temperatures. From vehicles at the Canadian border to Colorado ski towns to airport snowplows and school buses, biodiesel is proving its reliability even when the temperature plummets.

Biodiesel is an American-made fuel that can be produced from any fat or vegetable oil, such as soybean oil. "Concerns that biodiesel can't perform or flow well in adverse weather are based on myths," said Kelly Strebig, a research engineer for the University of Minnesota Center for Diesel Research at Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Strebig and other researchers have verified that B2, a blend of 2 percent biodiesel and 98 percent petroleum diesel has no measurable difference in cold flow properties than standard diesel. He says higher blends of biodiesel, such as B20, can be treated with standard flow-improvers—the same as most diesel fuel is treated in cold weather. The Center for Diesel Research also just completed studies of new additives that lowered the gel point of B20 to 50 degrees below zero.

"Many people aren't aware that cold flow improvers are already in most diesel during the winter," Strebig said. "The same procedures and products that keep diesel from gelling are typically good for biodiesel too. Many of these cold-flow improvers only cost ¾ cent to 1 ½ cents per gallon, and you only need them during the few coldest months of the year."

Known as the "Icebox of the Nation", International Falls, Minnesota is a good place to test the cold-weather reliability of any fuel. International Falls is home to Voyageurs National Park, which has used B20 for three years and has experienced no problems with it even though the B20 is stored in unheated above-ground tanks. B20-powered vehicles have started at 28 degrees below zero with only a common fuel block and fuel filter heater. The accompanying page of this news release provides more details on Voyageurs' use of biodiesel in cold weather along with profiles on the Town of Breckenridge Colorado, Lambert International Airport in St. Louis, Missouri, Medford, New Jersey School District and more.

"We aren't surprised at reports like these because biodiesel is such a well-tested fuel, both in the laboratory and in the real world," said National Biodiesel Board (NBB) Executive Director Joe Jobe. "For many years, Europeans have used biodiesel year-round in cold locations like the Swiss Alps. Likewise, the United States can depend on American-made biodiesel in even the coldest of conditions."

Biodiesel has similar horsepower, torque and BTU content compared to petroleum diesel. It offers excellent lubricity and higher cetane than diesel fuel. Biodiesel is registered with the EPA as a fuel and fuel additive. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released a new comprehensive technical report of biodiesel emissions data that shows that B20 can reduce emissions of total unburned hydrocarbons by 20 percent when compared to petroleum diesel. The report also verified a 12 percent reduction of both carbon monoxide and particulate matter with B20.

(more)

At Voyageurs National Park near International Falls, Minnesota, fuel reliability is critical to the employees at the 219,000-acre park since they can be 35 miles from any building during their workday. The park's use of biodiesel has grown since their first trial in 2000 and now biodiesel powers their dump trucks, all-terrain vehicles, a crawler, pickups, a barge and a backhoe. The park facilities only have unheated outdoor fuel storage tanks. Yet, biodiesel has always performed well. Even when temperatures dropped to 28 degrees below zero, B20-powered vehicles started smoothly in the morning and ran all day at subzero temperatures, according to the park's district supervisor William Carlson.

Another cold-weather park location, Yellowstone National Park in Montana, uses B20 in about 300 park vehicles, boilers and other diesel equipment.

The Town of Breckenridge, Colorado switched to B20 in 2002, and all is well with the fuel even at altitudes of 9,600-10,000 feet above sea level. Soy-based biodiesel powers two buses, a front-end loader, dump truck and a sidewalk snowplow in the town that thrives on cold-weather activities. "The B20 has met our performance needs while helping us make the environment better for all the people who come here to enjoy the outdoors," said Dan Bell, Breckenridge assistant public works director.

Lambert International Airport in St. Louis, Missouri is in its third year of using B20 in diverse equipment ranging from aircraft rescue, fire fighting equipment, heavy-duty snow plows, de-icer tankers, snow blowers and more. "Biodiesel has never let us down," said Fleet Maintenance Foreman Frank Williams. "I don't know of an operation where reliability is more critical for snow removal and emergency response than at an international airport."

Lambert uses soy-based B20 in all its diesel equipment, and it has 28 repair technicians who work on a fleet of more than 600 pieces of equipment in a shop that never closes. Williams notes that the repair crews appreciate the noticeable reduction in pollutants coming from the 400-plus horsepower engines.

Medford, New Jersey school buses keep on rolling with B20. "This is our fifth winter using biodiesel and we have had minimal problems, even in wind chill temperatures as low as eleven degrees below zero," said Joe Biluck, Director of Operations and Technology for the Medford, NJ School District. "We need a fuel we can rely on to transport our children – especially those with physical disabilities – safely in all kinds of weather. Biodiesel does just that." The Medford District uses an additive that is regularly used in diesel fuel to prevent the fuel from gelling in the cold weather.

NBB Seeks More Cold Weather Stories

The National Biodiesel Board wants to hear your favorite cold weather story with biodiesel. You can email info@biodiesel.org with the date, location, temperature, the blend of biodiesel, equipment you were using and the job you were performing. Send pictures too. Let us know how to reach you since selected stories may be featured on our website.

Readers can learn more about biodiesel by visiting <http://www.biodiesel.org>. Fact sheets on biodiesel and cold weather are at <http://www.biodiesel.org/resources/fuelfactsheets/>. The National Biodiesel Board is funded in part by the United Soybean Board and state soybean board checkoff programs.

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