

Propane Autogas Police Cars

Save Money with a Cleaner Fuel Option

In a world with rising gas prices, it may not seem surprising that many people are now considering the use of alternative fuels as a solution. What may shock you is that propane, chemically the same propane used in grills, is the leading alternative fuel worldwide. However, when propane is used in a vehicle, it is often referred to as *propane autogas* or simply *autogas*.

Currently, more than 18 million vehicles in the world run on autogas. As more Americans discover that autogas is a cheaper, cleaner fuel that is domestically produced (over 90% in the United States), that number is expected rise. "I think it's a worthy endeavor on the part of sheriffs' offices, and smart people will be looking to the use of autogas more and more in the coming years," says Jackson County, Georgia Sheriff, Stan Evans. "Price and supply will dictate it." In the future, more vehicles, including police vehicles, taxis, trucks, buses, vans, and delivery vehicles. will run on this fuel.

Overview

- Autogas costs on average \$1.00 less per gallon than gasoline
- Conversion kits, including installation, range in cost at about \$4,000 to \$7,000 for most police vehicles
- Conversions are a viable option for fleets not ready to replace existing fleet cars
- A \$0.50 tax credit per gallon of propane autogas used is currently available nationwide
- Propane autogas increases engine life and reduces maintenance concerns
- Each gallon of propane autogas goes about 75% the distance of gasoline
- In most cases propane autogas increases horsepower, torque, and towing capacity
- Propane autogas' higher octane level allows the fuel to burn cleaner and more efficiently
- Fleet vehicles can either be dedicated (only run on autogas) or bi-fuel (most common and operates on gasoline and propane autogas)
- Bi-fuel vehicles significantly increase driving range

Get in Touch

Alleyn Harned

Executive Director
Virginia Clean Cities
540-568-8896
aharned@vacleancities.org

Sabrene Bader

Director of Grants Administration
Virginia Clean Cities
540-568-5029
sbader@vacleancities.org

 www.facebook.com/virginiacleancities

 www.youtube.com/user/virginiacleancities

 www.twitter.com/vacleancities



Fleet Cost Savings

Fleet	Number of Autogas Vehicles in Fleet	Annual Autogas Fuel Usage (gallons)	Annual Fuel Cost Savings
Newport News, VA	22	18,000	\$31,000
Spotsylvania County, VA	24	50,000	\$95,000
Jackson County, GA	60	117,000	\$185,500
Pickens County, SC	20	15,720	\$16,593

The table above represents actual police fleet data and includes the \$0.50 tax credit per gallon in annual fuel cost savings. Conversions of these fleets were funded by the Department of Energy as part of the Southeast Propane Autogas Development Program. The Southeast Propane Autogas Development Program is managed by Virginia Clean Cities at James Madison University. At its completion, the program will have overseen the conversion of 1,200 vehicles to propane autogas from a variety of fleets, 13 of which are police fleets.

Safety Q & A

What if the vehicle runs out of autogas and it isn't near a propane refueling site? Once the autogas tank is empty, a bi-fuel vehicle will automatically switch over and run on gasoline. This means that the driver will have *two* fuel tanks and will actually be able to go longer without needing to stop in order to refuel. If the driver needs to refuel far from a propane refueling site, they may fill the vehicle on gasoline.

What if there are propane spills or leaks? Autogas has a low flammability range, which means that the odds of accidental combustion are minimized. It will not ignite when combined with air unless the source of ignition reaches 850-950°F. (Gasoline will ignite when the source of ignition reaches about 495°F). Propane will not harm the air, drinking water, or soil quality because it will vaporize and dissipate into the air.

In the event of an accident, how will the tank hold up? Autogas vehicles and their fueling systems are designed to perform safely in the event of a crash. This is because autogas vehicle tanks are 20 times more puncture-resistant than gasoline tanks and their fueling systems are equipped with safety devices and shut-off valves that function automatically if the fuel line ruptures.

General safety training is also available, as well as training for operating and fueling autogas-powered vehicles.



Sources: www.roushcleantech.com/content/safety • www.afdc.energy.gov/fuels/propane_benefits.html • www.allianceautogas.com/benefits-of-autogas/

