



Jack Kazmierski
kaz@cogeco.ca

Going Green

Plugged Into the Future

Green technologies are changing the way fleet managers do business now, and how they will operate in the (near) future.



Roger Smith, director of Transportation Initiatives, FleetChallenge Ontario, plugs a PEMS-equipped police vehicle in for charging.

The City of Hamilton and the City of Toronto joined forces earlier this year (with support from FleetChallenge Ontario) to host the 4th annual Green Fleet Expo. Bigger and better than ever before, this year's event attracted over 300 people, leaving little more than standing room at many of the seminars and presentations.

"The Green Fleet Expo provides an opportunity for the Cities of Toronto and Hamilton—the two largest municipal fleets in Southern Ontario—to showcase the progress that has been made in introducing green fleet technology to our fleets," says Chris Hill, manager, Central Fleet, Fleet and Facilities, Public Works Department, City of Hamilton. "It also allows us to show other municipal fleet managers, as well as fleet managers in the private sector, what is possible today and what the future might hold."

Idling

While seminars and information sessions are the main attraction at the annual Green Fleet Expo, the event features the popular Ride and Drive, and provides green technology suppliers with a forum to present their wares.

This year's technology headliner was an

idle reduction system known as the "Police and EMS Idling Reduction Demonstration Project," or PEMS for short. Presented by FleetChallenge Ontario, PEMS is designed to limit idling by emergency vehicles, many of which can spend hours parked at an emergency scene.

The test vehicles on display at the Expo were able to maintain all onboard DC systems and cab climate control without idling and with no compromise in performance. Besides reducing idling, PEMS-equipped vehicles burn less fuel when on a scene, with additional benefits that include a decrease in greenhouse gases, and a reduction in health hazards for first responders.

"You can park these vehicles, secure them, take the keys out and lock them up," says Roger Smith, director of Transportation Initiatives, FleetChallenge Ontario. "You can leave all the lights on, the computers on, radios on and just walk away. The vehicles will maintain their own temperatures and all the electric systems will keep running."

While the vehicles on display were impressive and promising, Smith says PEMS technology is still in the testing phase. "These vehicles are a proof of concept.

We'll be doing formal testing [soon], but even with informal testing we've already seen a 36% reduction in fuel use."

PEMS-equipped vehicles come with an outlet that can be used to plug the vehicle into a regular wall outlet whenever the need for recharging the onboard batteries arises. "A vehicle that returns to the municipal garage at the end of the day with completely depleted batteries," Smith says, "can be plugged in and the batteries recharged overnight and ready for use the next day."

Tomorrow's technology today

Walking through the parking lot, attendees had an opportunity to preview technologies that are sure to change the way fleets are operated in the near future. Even today, fleet managers can take advantage of hybrid aerial trucks that are able to take workers to the tips of trees for trimming on battery power alone, catalytic converters that clean up emissions from lawn mowers and other equipment, and zero-emission ice resurfacers that keep the air clean in arenas.

Tomorrow's fleets will benefit from today's innovations—many of which were previewed and discussed at this year's Green Fleet Expo. ■

Fleet Challenge Ontario

294 Richmond Street East, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario M5A 1P5

www.fleetchallenge.ca

Email: info@fleetchallenge.ca

Telephone: 416 207 9774

Toll free: 1 866 312 5659 (USA and Canada)

Driving Change