Can propane school buses save money and provide other benefits?

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Argonne National Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy have released a case study examining the environmental and economic costs and benefits of propane school buses.

School districts across the country are looking for ways to save money and be more environmentally sustainable. A new case study from the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory that examines five school bus fleets that are successfully using propane school buses provides one promising option. The case study describes how some of the school districts saved nearly 50% on a cost per mile basis for fuel and maintenance relative to diesel, in addition to seeing a variety of other environmental and social benefits.

The case study describes both the benefits and challenges of deploying propane in school bus fleets. Using Argonne National Laboratory's Alternative Fuel Life-Cycle Environmental and Economic Transportation (AFLEET) Tool developed for the DOE's Clean Cities

program, the results showed payback periods over which the fleet recouped the incremental costs of vehicles and infrastructure ranging from three to eight years.

Overall, fuel economy for these propane vehicles is close to that of the diesel vehicles they replaced, on an energy-equivalent basis. In addition, the 110 propane buses described in the study eliminated the use of 212,000 diesel gallon equivalents per year of petroleum, and 770 tons per year of greenhouse gases. The study is available for download on the Alternative Fuels Data Center.

More information: The case study is available online: www.afdc.energy.gov/uploads/pu … chool-bus-fleets.pdf

Provided by Argonne National Laboratory