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CNG fuel on tap in Hauppauge

BY JOHN LAUINGER
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Need gas? Hauppauge will soon have plenty - as home to the East Coast's largest publicly-accessible compressed natural gas fueling station.

Announcing the installation, Gov. Pataki called it "a huge step forward" in reducing America's dependence on foreign oil.

As part of an effort to establish a statewide network of alternative-fuel stations, New York state has contributed \$150,000 toward a project to significantly upgrade an existing compressed natural gas fueling station in Hauppauge, Pataki said.

Operated by California-based Clean Energy, the largest supplier of natural gas fuel in the country, the Hauppauge station will be expanded from its current 40-gallons-per-hour capacity to almost 1,000 gallons per hour. Two dual-hose dispensers also will be added.

When they are completed by year's end, the upgrades will make the Hauppauge station the largest publicly-accessible CNG station on the East Coast, according to Pataki and Clean Energy.

In future years, fuel from the Hauppauge station will be used to power eco-friendly sanitation trucks in the Town of Smithtown - which in June became the first municipality in the state to switch its refuse-collection fleet from diesel to CNG.

At a news conference in Kings Park this week, Pataki described the Clean Energy deal - brokered by his administration - as an "aggressive measure to reduce our overreliance on foreign oil, so much of which comes from countries that have values diametrically opposed to ours."

He described CNG as a cleaner, cheaper alternative to petroleum, and said Smithtown's move to convert its sanitation-collection fleet to CNG will reduce "emissions of nitrous oxide and particulates by 350 million tons" over the next seven years.

CNG "comes from domestic sources," Pataki said. "It's cleaner, it keeps the money here in America and at the end of the day, it's going to be less expensive for the taxpayers of Smithtown."

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