

# Hydrogen Answers Mass Transit's Emissions Issue, Is O&G Next?

PENN VALLEY, PA, US, February 17, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The oil and gas industry, already running to embrace [hydrogen](#) as the answer to emissions problems, needs to visit Canton, Ohio, to speak with SARTA Executive Director/CEO Kirt Conrad.

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*Joe Barone, President and Founder, Shale Directories*

The Stark (County, Ohio) Area Regional Transit Authority is an acknowledged pioneer/leader in the use of hydrogen to power public transportation buses.

Under Conrad’s stewardship, SARTA’s Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC)-powered bus fleet has become the third-largest in the world – second largest in the U.S. behind only California. Currently, 19 of 110 buses are hydrogen-powered.

Showing the advantages with hydrogen is something, O&G

players can see close-up in Canton. “We demonstrate the technology to transit agencies around the world,” Conrad said. “Our ‘Borrow a Bus’ program will lend a bus to any transit agency to operate the bus themselves. We are pushing the technology.”

Conrad will explain his employer’s use of, and all the advantages of using fuel cells in transportation, at the First Annual Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture [Conference](#), slated for April 8, at the Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh Southpointe, south of Pittsburgh. The one-day program is presented by Shale Directories.

“Having a hydrogen fuel cells presentation is an important element of our Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Conference,” stated Joe Barone, President and Founder, Shale Directories.

Fuel cells, used to generate power with the only emissions being water and heat, are nothing new. The technology was invented in 1859 (ironically, the year Col. Edwin Drake struck oil in Titusville, PA), according to Conrad.

“The technology isn’t new, we’re just putting it together in a new way,” he said.

SARTA/Conrad has jumped into HFC bus power wholeheartedly. In roughly six years, the regional transit authority has garnered 30 grants from six different federal and state sources, totaling more than \$30 million.

Involved with HFC bus development from Day One, home to a hydrogen demonstration lab, and a state-of-the-art hydrogen refueling station, SARTA/Conrad has seen ongoing improvements in HFC technology, lighter, stronger buses, with said vehicles falling in price.

"The first HFC-powered bus we bought cost \$2.4 million," Conrad said. "Now, they are running about \$900,000, and I just talked with a new vendor who said we could get a new bus for \$600,000 – putting it on par with a diesel-powered bus."

SARTA recently was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to work with engine maker giant Cummins and North America's second-largest bus maker, Gillig, on Cummins first fuel cell developed for a commercial bus application.

SPARTA's bus fleet also includes compressed natural gas (CNG)-powered and diesel-electric hybrid vehicles, in addition to traditional diesel-powered vehicles.

But in every comparison, HFC buses exhibit more power, with California hydrogen buses running strong for a dozen years/500,000 miles.

"One thing about diesel engine parts is your can buy them at AutoZone," Conrad said. "With HFC buses, it's hard to get parts – not for the fuel cell stack, but for other bus-related parts."

Still, Conrad and his people continue to push to get more from hydrogen, saying the goal is 60% more power from the fuel cell stack.

"At some point, engine makers will quit building internal combustion engines," he said.

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