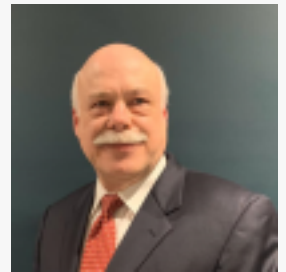


Home of NFL Hall of Fame also Home of the Global Leader in H2 Fuel Cell-Powered Buses

PENN VALLEY, PA, US, November 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The city of Canton in northeast Ohio, is known worldwide as home to the National Football League's Hall of Fame.

But just five miles to the southeast of the football Hall is the center of what many in the transportation industry worldwide believe is ground zero for zero-emissions vehicles – specifically, [Hydrogen fuel cell-powered](#) buses.

The Stark Area Regional Transit Authority ([SARTA](#)), led by long-time Executive Director/CEO Kirt Conrad, for six years has been saying through its actions H2 is the way of the future.



Tom Gellrich, CEO
& Founder, H2-
CCS Network

“We currently have a 110-vehicle fleet, with 21 vehicles Hydrogen fuel cell-powered,” said Conrad, who has reduced diesel fuel to standby duty. Much of the fleet operates on compressed natural gas. Conrad adds the transit system will convert its entire fleet to H2 fuel cells in the next decade.

“

We're pleased to have the globally recognized leader in hydrogen fuel cell-powered buses at our Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Conference”

*Tom Gellrich, CEO and
Founder, H2-CCS Network*

Conrad will tell the SARTA story at next week's [Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Conference V](#), slated for Nov. 30, at the Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh/Southpointe. The all-day program was developed by the H2-CCS Network and Shale Directories.

“We're pleased to have the globally recognized leader in hydrogen fuel cell-powered buses at our Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Conference,” stated Tom

Gellrich, CEO & Founder, H2-CCS Network.

SARTA's CEO is known as a first mover when it comes to zero emissions, but he also is somewhat of a financial guru.

Rarely, if ever, do transit agencies of any size run a surplus. So if Conrad and his team wanted to purchase a Hydrogen fuel cell-powered (HFC) bus, at the time costing \$2.5 million, it needed other revenue streams. The answer was federal and state grants.

SARTA first received a \$2.7 million Federal Transportation Administration grant that paid for the first HFC bus. Next was \$8.9 million in FTA Low/No Emission funding that paid for five more buses.

Thus far, the entire cost of SARTA's fuel cell research and development program, including the construction of a Hydrogen fueling station and the purchase of full size and paratransit vehicles has been funded entirely by more than \$20 million in state and federal grants.

Currently, Conrad is moving forward with purchases as fast as the industry allows. While the price of a new H2 bus has fallen to \$1.1 million, the problem is bus availability.

"There are only two manufacturers of HFC buses, and the wait from signing a contract to delivery is 12 to 14 months," according to Conrad.

Another drawback in conversion is the lack of availability of Hydrogen. "I think the demand for Hydrogen took off faster than the Hydrogen industry thought it would, which can make it hard to get product," Conrad said.

SARTA's H2 currently is being shipped from Sarnia, Ontario Canada, via tanker. The fuel is shipped in liquid form at -480 degrees Fahrenheit. Once it reaches Canton, the fuel is regasified.

The Appalachian Hydrogen Hub will cut H2 transportation costs to Canton significantly. SARTA naturally is a big Appalachian Hub booster.

Seeking outside funding, pushing to acquire more HFCs, plus his day-to-day duties as head of a regional transit system certainly keeps Conrad busy.

And that's not including hosting transit system delegations who journey to Canton to see how SARTA operates.

"We've had a number of visitors, from agencies in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York, and as far away as from New Zealand," Conrad said.

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