

COUNCIL POLICY

SUBJECT: ALTERNATIVE FUELS
POLICY NO.: 200-17
EFFECTIVE DATE: April 24, 1995

BACKGROUND:

For many years, some parts of California have been identified as having very poor air quality. Because of this, California has had auto pollution laws for some time. In an effort to reduce vehicle exhaust emissions and improve air quality, the State has experimented with alternate fuels since the 1970's. In the last twenty years, the City of San Diego has grown, and so has the air quality problem in the region. As a result, San Diego has a vital interest in implementing a proactive program to reduce exhaust emissions and improve air quality.

Current legislation affecting the City and its citizens are the California Clean Air Act of 1988, the Federal Clean Air Act of 1990 and the Energy Policy of 1992. The Clean air acts are concerned with regulating the level of pollutant emissions from vehicles. The Energy Policy Act of 1992 focuses on reducing the nation's dependence on imported oil by mandating that a percentage of new vehicle purchases be alternate fuel vehicles. Under the Clean Air Act, the State of California has tasked the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to achieve the maximum degree of emission reductions to meet air quality standards. The CARB program has three elements:

Use of reformulated gasoline to address the existing fleet;

Introduction of low emission vehicles by automobile manufacturers; and

Implementation of transportation control measures by the local air pollution control districts.

To promote benefits of using alternate fuels in vehicles, the State of California launched pilot programs in which government fleets acquired and operated converted vehicles. In support of this effort, since 1984 the City of San Diego has participated in state-sponsored alternate fuel programs, one using methanol and another using compressed natural gas (CNG).

PURPOSE:

The purpose of establishing an Alternate Fuel Policy is to enable the City of San Diego to meet reduced exhaust emission mandates by providing practical, broad-visioned guidelines. In doing so, the City of San Diego can take active steps toward achieving a cleaner environment and providing a leadership role in the local region.

By encouraging use of alternative fuels and participating in development of the infrastructure necessary to create viable alternatives to gasoline and diesel powered engines, the City of San Diego can assist the region in achieving improved air quality and energy independence.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the City of San Diego to assume a proactive role in developing improved air quality and energy independence. Those proactive actions shall include but are not limited to:

Reducing vehicle exhaust emissions through use of cleaner alternative fuels where practical and fiscally responsible opportunities arise;

Forming partnerships with other agencies to promote clean air programs and activities;

Utilizing available incentives to offset extraordinary costs of conversion to alternatively fueled vehicles and construction of supporting infrastructure, which provide not only reduced emissions, but also provide visible examples of practical alternatives for local fleet operators and individual vehicle owners;

Converting all elements of the City fleet to clean alternative fuels wherever technology exists for proven, practical, and fiscally viable vehicles; and

Working toward fuel independence by developing local fuel resources in lieu of dependence upon imported fuels.

The City Manager will direct those departments involved in procurement of motive equipment to develop an implementation plan and to consider this policy in specifications for vehicle purchases where proven, practical technology exists which will reduce exhaust emissions and improve fuel independence.

HISTORY:

Adopted by Resolution R-285641 04/24/1995