

INEXPENSIVE, ABUNDANT NATURAL GAS GETS THE JOB DONE!

Written By:

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Where transportation fuel is concerned, natural gas is cheap; natural gas is clean, and natural gas can do the work + go the distance.

First, Compressed fossil Natural Gas (CNG) and Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) is extremely inexpensive. Given the cost of the gas molecules themselves, as well as the value from sale of tax and environmental credits that accrue when CNG and RNG are used as transportation fuel, CNG and RNG can cost as little as \$0.50 - \$1.00 per Diesel Gallon Equivalent (DGE) when a fleet finances, builds, and maintains its own natural gas-fueling station. When fleets retain a 3rd party to finance, build, and maintain a natural gas-fueling station for them, then the cost of fuel climbs to \$2.00 - \$3.00 per gallon. Fleets see a similar price point when they purchase CNG or RNG from a public-access natural gas-fueling station. As such, fleets can accrue meaningful cash savings by switching from Diesel to natural gas.

Natural gas is clean. For example, Cummins' current line of 9 and 15 Liter engines release 90% fewer particulate and Nitrogen Oxide emissions as compared with the cleanest-burning Diesel engines without need for expensive pollution-control equipment. This has a direct benefit on human health, especially in disadvantaged communities

that are close to freeways, ports, and industrial facilities. Combustion of CNG and RNG also releases fewer Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions than fossil Diesel or Renewable Diesel. For example, fossil Diesel has a Carbon Intensity (CI) Score of approximately 100, and Renewable Diesel has a CI Score of roughly 40. In contrast, fossil-derived CNG has a CI Score of roughly 80; RNG that comes from a landfill has a CI Score of about 50; RNG that is produced at wastewater treatment plants lowers the CI Score to between 10 and 40, and RNG that comes from a dairy or a confined animal feeding operation (CAFO) will have a CI Score significantly less than zero. Collecting methane and producing RNG at dairies and CAFOs prevents methane from going into the atmosphere, which is far more harmful. In this way, using CNG and RNG as transportation fuel offers meaningful opportunities to improve human health and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Natural gas can do the work. Prior to the introduction of Cummins' X15N natural gas engine, CNG- and RNG-powered trucks could not operate well at weights greater than 82,000 lbs. Following the US commercial introduction of Cummins' X15N engine in 2024, natural gas-powered trucks are operating successfully at 105,000 – 115,000 pounds – even on grades of 6% - 7%! To that end, Alliance Members can point to multiple fleets that are successfully “running heavy” on natural gas.

Natural gas can go the distance. With a 175 DGE

fuel tank, natural gas-fueled trucks have a range that is only slightly less than their Diesel counterparts. For example, if a Diesel-powered tractor has a maximum range of 1,200 miles, its natural gas-fueled counterpart would likely have a range of approximately 900 miles. Also, fueling a natural gas-powered truck at a Fast-fill natural gas-fueling station takes no more time than fueling a Diesel truck.

In this way, CNG and RNG offer the only technologically-viable way to decarbonize heavy-duty transportation.

To be clear, there is nothing wrong with pursuing Zero Emission Vehicle technology where appropriate. For lighter vehicles with less demanding routes, it may make sense to convert to Battery Electric or Hydrogen Fuel Cell technology. When fleets need to move heavier material over greater distances (e.g.: Concrete, agricultural products, logs, or construction materials), natural gas engine technology offers the only way to decarbonize in a manner that makes technological and financial sense.

To learn whether using CNG and RNG could make sense for you, please reach out to Alex Schay from the Alliance for Clean Transportation at aschay@nwalliance.net. Because the Alliance for Clean Transportation receives regular dues from members, including engine manufacturers, fuel providers, gas utilities, and RNG producers, the Alliance can help your fleet estimate net cash savings over time, fleet-conversion payback periods, and GHG reductions, free of charge.

If interested, the Alliance for Clean Transportation, Cummins Engines, Freedom-CNG, and Hexagon Agility Fuel Solutions, will present at Utah Trucking Association Safety Luncheons on March 4th & 5th, 2026. To learn more, please reach out to Jon Boyer from the Utah Trucking Association on: jon@utahtrucking.com.



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