



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 12, 2015

CONTACT:

Mike Claffey

312.744.0707

Michael.claffey@cityofchicago.org

**City of Chicago Launches *Drive Clean Taxi*
to Spur the Adoption of Alternative Fuel Vehicles in Public Passenger Vehicle Fleets**

More than \$1 Million in incentives soon to be available for electric and natural gas vehicles

The City's Drive Clean Chicago program today announced plans to deploy as many as 120 clean vehicles on Chicago's streets through the new Drive Clean Taxi program. Drive Clean Chicago, an arm of the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), is partnering with CALSTART, a non-profit organization dedicated to accelerating the growth of clean transportation alternatives.

The Drive Clean Taxi program is now accepting applications from vendors who want to participate in the program made possible through a federal clean air grant. Later this year, vendors will offer discounts of up to \$10,000 toward each electric or compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicle supplied to taxi, livery or other public passenger fleets. Drive Clean Chicago previously launched the Drive Clean Truck program in 2014.

Drive Clean Taxi is open to taxi cab owners and other public passenger vehicle fleets in good standing with the City's Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP). BACP licenses and regulates the public vehicle industry in the City of Chicago.

"CDOT is very excited to be able to step up our support for sustainable fleet efficiency through the Drive Clean Chicago and Drive Clean Taxi programs," CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld said. "These green vehicles will help improve air quality, reduce petroleum use and build a cleaner transportation network for the City of Chicago."

"I am pleased the taxi fleet has newer and more fuel efficient vehicles for taxicab drivers to lease," BACP Commissioner Maria Guerra Lapacek said. "Now, the majority of vehicles leased to taxicab drivers are alternative fuel (hybrid) and taxicab drivers are seeing the gas pump savings in their pockets."

“We are very pleased to be partnering with the City of Chicago on this program that will have a positive impact in terms of clean air and public health. We salute Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s creativity and leadership with this important City initiative. Drive Clean Chicago will help fleets deploy advanced vehicle technologies that are better for the environment, economy and the future of sustainable transportation in Chicago,” said John Boesel, President and CEO of CALSTART.

Unlike grant or rebate programs, the City’s innovative Drive Clean Taxi voucher program will enable taxi and other public passenger vehicle fleets such as liveries to purchase or lease cleaner vehicles at a reduced cost at the point of sale. Drive Clean Chicago is funded through the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. Vouchers will cover 80%, up to \$10,000, of the incremental or conversion costs of electric and CNG vehicles serving in taxi and public passenger vehicle fleets.

Vouchers will be available on a first-come, first-served basis once the City of Chicago and CALSTART have approved a list of eligible vehicles and vendors, which is expected by this summer. Interested vehicle manufacturers, dealerships and conversion system providers are invited to visit Drive Clean Chicago’s website at www.DriveCleanChicago.com for more information on how to participate.

In 2014 Drive Clean Chicago launched the Drive Clean Truck program, a voucher incentive for eligible electric and hybrid Class 2 – 8 vehicles. Commercial and public fleets that operate in Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties are encouraged to work with an approved vendor to request an incentive. Voucher amounts are 80% of the incremental or up-fitting costs per vehicle. Drive Clean Truck aims to deploy as many as 250 electric and hybrid trucks and buses.

Through similar federally funded incentive programs, the City has helped deploy over 400 cleaner vehicles for Chicago area fleets and over 220 alternative fuel stations since 2010. To date, these vehicles and stations have displaced 7.5 million gallons of gasoline and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by an amount comparable to taking 3,750 cars off the road.

About Drive Clean Chicago

Drive Clean Chicago is an innovative incentive program aimed at creating a roadmap for a greater alternative fuel transportation network for Chicago. Given the fluctuation in fuel costs, vehicle emissions and the lack of infrastructure for alternative fuels, Drive Clean Chicago provides important incentives to help Chicago fleet owners purchase cleaner vehicles that are better for business and the environment. The program is funded by resources from the federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program and supports Mayor Emanuel’s mission to make Chicago the most livable, sustainable and competitive city in the world.

About CALSTART

CALSTART is a non-profit organization that works to accelerate the nationwide growth of the clean transportation technology industry. The organization has more than 150 member companies and manages an array of high-impact programs with its industry and government partners. CALSTART manages similar incentive programs for the states of California and New York. For more information, visit www.calstart.org.

You can follow CDOT on digital media:

Twitter: [@ChicagoDOT](https://twitter.com/ChicagoDOT)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CDOTNews

The web: chicagodot.org

#