

Palmetto Clean Fuels Coalition Presents Green Fleet Leader Award to Farmers Telephone Cooperative

Monday, July 24, 2017 | 10 AM

631 N Pike W, Sumter, SC 29153

WELCOME:

Palmetto Clean Fuels Co-Coordinators: Landon Masters and Maeve Mason

SPEAKERS FROM:



AWARD PRESENTATION:

Palmetto Clean Fuels Co-Coordinators will present FTC with the Green Fleet Leader Award in recognition of its commitment to propane autogas and innovation that helped during Hurricane Matthew in October 2016.

FUELING DEMONSTRATION:

FTC staff will show how they refuel their trucks with propane autogas, and will be available for questions and tours of the fueling station.





For information, contact:
Landon Masters
Palmetto Clean Fuels Coalition
Office Phone: (803) 737-8285
Email: lmasters@regstaff.sc.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Columbia, S.C., July 19, 2017 –

Palmetto Clean Fuels Coalition recognizes FTC as a ‘Green Fleet Leader’

SUMTER, SC – The Palmetto Clean Fuels coalition (PCF), an initiative of the S.C. Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) Energy Office, will **present FTC with a South Carolina Green Fleet Leader award during a press conference on Monday, July 24, 2017 at 10:00 AM at FTC’s refueling station in Sumter, SC.**

As a US Department of Energy (DOE) Clean Cities coalition, PCF promotes the use of alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technologies. PCF recognizes FTC as a Green Fleet Leader for its commitment to using propane in its fleet vehicles.

Also known as liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or propane autogas, propane is the world's third most common transportation fuel according to DOE, and it is considered an alternative fuel under the Energy Policy Act of 1992. The potential for lower maintenance costs is one reason behind LPG’s popularity for high-mileage vehicles.

In 2009, FTC worked with Sumter’s Palmetto Gas to install kits on 63 Chevrolet trucks, which turned gasoline engines into propane engines with the flip of a switch. Each vehicle costs about \$6,300 to convert, which was funded through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program named the Carolina Blue Skies Green Jobs Initiative.

FTC installed refueling pumps at its offices in Kingstree and Sumter, and at a convenience store in Clarendon County, thus making it convenient for drivers to fill up. This was crucial in October 2016 when Hurricane Matthew caused significant power outages in large portions of South Carolina. FTC serves five counties that were severely affected by the storm. Because of the availability of propane, FTC drivers were not dependent on electrically powered gas pumps and were available to visit job sites and repair infrastructure. In addition, these trucks could travel almost twice the distance between fill-ups, because of the bi-fuel (LPG and gasoline)-system that allowed drivers to deplete both tanks before refueling.

The savings for companies substituting LPG for gasoline can be substantial. The Carolina Blue Skies Green Jobs grant meant FTC did not have to make any initial cash investment, which made the decision to switch that much easier. FTC Purchasing Agent Lide Howell said that the company has had significant savings since 2009 by using LPG instead of conventional gasoline.

Howell anticipated saving money at the pump based on the agreement with Palmetto Gas, but didn’t expect to get the same miles per gallon. LPG has a lower British thermal unit rating per gallon, which usually results in lower fuel economy for the vehicle. That turned out to be the case with the 1500 Series trucks FTC converted, but not with the 2500 Series trucks where the difference has been insignificant, thus allowing for even more cost savings.

“Palmetto Clean Fuels is happy to present this award to FTC,” noted Anthony James, Director of the Energy Office within the ORS. “We are excited about the advancement of clean transportation projects in South Carolina, and FTC’s success is proof positive.”

South Carolina currently has 49 public and private LPG refueling stations. The address of the propane refueling facility where the press conference will take place is 631 N Pike W, Sumter, SC 29153.

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About the Palmetto Clean Fuels coalition (PCF)

The PCF coalition is an initiative of the Office of Regulatory Staff - Energy Office. PCF is a Clean Cities coalition, a locally based, voluntary public/private partnership coordinated by the US Department of Energy (DOE). PCF works to increase the use of alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technologies in South Carolina. PCF strives to help public and private entities, as well as individuals, lower fuel costs, improve air quality, and reduce petroleum consumption. PCF also promotes idle reduction, fuel economy measures, vehicle miles traveled reductions, and bicycle and pedestrian efforts.

About FTC

Founded in 1951, Farmers Telephone Cooperative Inc. is a local, multifaceted telecommunications company headquartered in Kingstree, S.C. Serving more than 60,000 customers within a coverage area of 3,000 square miles, FTC provides cutting-edge technology to businesses and residents in Clarendon, Lower Florence, Lee, Sumter, and Williamsburg counties in South Carolina. A veteran in the telephone industry, FTC is among the largest telephone cooperatives in the United States. FTC has evolved into a state-of-the-art organization offering Internet, Wireless, Voice, Security and Digital TV. Customers can choose from a wide array of products and services at any of the company's seven full-service business stores.

