



Amtrak *Heartland Flyer* Tests Cleaner, Renewable Fuel For Passenger Trains Biodiesel blend with beef byproduct in 12-month experiment

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amtrak and the Oklahoma and Texas state transportation departments today announced the nation's first test of a cleaner and renewable biodiesel fuel blend to power a daily interstate passenger train between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the use of foreign oil.

Amtrak received a \$274,000 grant from the Federal Railroad Administration to carry out the research project in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation on the daily *Heartland Flyer* train operated by Amtrak with support from both Oklahoma and Texas. The biodiesel blend includes beef byproduct and is provided by a Texas-based vendor.

In previously conducted stationary locomotive engine testing, the biodiesel blend known as B20 (20% pure biofuel and 80% diesel) reduced hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide each by 10 percent, reduced particulates by 15 percent and sulfates by 20 percent. Detailed measurements will be taken on the P32-8 locomotive at the end of 12 months so any impact of the biodiesel on valves and gaskets can be measured. Amtrak will collect locomotive exhaust emissions data for analysis in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency locomotive exhaust emissions federal test protocols.

"Quality of life issues are increasingly important. The *Heartland Flyer* has always provided high-quality service and being the first to test this program is another testimony in doing that by trying to improve the environment," Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation Gary Ridley said. "We are truly proud that Oklahoma is a part of this innovative way to improve our quality of life."



"Improving air quality and providing multimodal transportation alternatives are goals central to Texas transportation development efforts," Texas Department of Transportation Rail Division Director Bill Glavin said. "Our partnership with Amtrak and Oklahoma on the *Heartland Flyer* helps us accomplish both goals - motorists have an additional option for travel between North Texas and Oklahoma City, which not only takes vehicles off the highway, but reduces harmful emissions compared to traditional diesel-fueled locomotives."

"Amtrak travel is already more energy efficient than most other forms of intercity transportation," Amtrak Vice President, Environmental, Health and Safety Roy Deitchman said. "If the test shows this use of a renewable fuel in our locomotive is successful, it's a home run for our passengers, for our partners and for the planet."

At events timed with the train's morning departure from Oklahoma City and afternoon arrival in Fort Worth, officials attached a version of the Amtrak "green seal" to the 3,200-horsepower locomotive that powers the train and compared samples of diesel and biodiesel fuels.

Oklahoma's environment secretary issued a statement in support and state's agriculture secretary attended the Oklahoma City event.

"I commend ODOT, TxDOT and Amtrak for their commitment to using a cleaner burning fuel that will ultimately help us deal with air quality challenges", Oklahoma Secretary of Environment J.D. Strong said. "This project also promotes the national security benefits of utilizing our own natural resources for fuel, rather than imported petroleum, and putting money in the pockets of our agricultural producers, rather than foreign governments."

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INFORMATION RELEASE

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION
200 N.E. 21ST ST. OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105-3204 PHONE 405-521-6000

“Renewable fuels such as biodiesel are perfect examples as they combine our state’s two leading industries, agriculture and energy, to come together and create this tremendous asset for Oklahoma,” Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Terry Peach said. “The potential for environmental protection and economic development opportunities make this exciting.”

The Texas Beef Council was on hand at the event in Fort Worth to provide information and materials to passengers, explaining cattle provide many products -- in addition to beef -- and this is an example of two industries using unique resources to power interstate transportation.

About the Heartland Flyer

The Amtrak *Heartland Flyer* was inaugurated June 14, 1999, with federal funds received by Okla. DOT that were designed to initiate service in areas without Amtrak trains. TxDOT joined the partnership with Oklahoma and Amtrak in 2006. The 10th anniversary of the service was celebrated in 2009, with the support of the *Heartland Flyer* Coalition, representing the communities along the 206-mile route. Ridership last month was up 2.7 percent versus March 2009 and totaled 33,696 from October 2009 through March 2010.

The public can participate in the biofuel test and save money traveling as Amtrak is offering a 50-percent discount off a companion fare on the *Heartland Flyer* with the advance purchase of an adult fare through May 28, 2010. Fare Code H838 must be used and other restrictions apply for travel through May 31, 2010. Amtrak operates the *Heartland Flyer* under state-funded contracts with Okla. DOT and TxDOT to provide daily service, with regularly scheduled stops in Oklahoma City, Norman, Purcell, Pauls Valley and Ardmore, Oklahoma and in Gainesville and Fort Worth, Texas. For additional information, visit www.heartlandflyer.com.

About the Oklahoma Department of Transportation

The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is to provide a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma. For more information, visit www.okladot.state.ok.us

About the Texas Department of Transportation

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining nearly 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its approximately 12,000 employees strive to empower local leaders to solve local transportation problems, and to use new financial tools, including tolling and public-private partnerships, to reduce congestion and pave the way for future economic growth while enhancing safety, improving air quality and increasing the value of the state’s transportation assets. Find out more at www.txdot.gov.

About Amtrak

As the nation’s intercity passenger rail operator, Amtrak connects America in safer, greener and healthier ways. Last fiscal year (FY 2009), the railroad carried 27.2 million passengers, making it the second-best year in the company’s history. With 21,000 route miles in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian provinces, Amtrak operates more than 300 trains each day—at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph)—to more than 500 destinations. Amtrak also is the partner of choice for state-supported corridor services in 15 states and for several commuter rail agencies. Visit Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information.

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(Editors and News Directors: For more information call the ODOT Media & Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)