



City of New York  
Parks & Recreation



## News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### *Astoria Park Vehicles Go “Clean & Green” To Reduce Air Emissions through Efforts of Queens Boro Prez, Queens Clean Air Project Partners and NYC Parks & Recreation*

#### *\$2 million Queens Clean Air Project Funded by NY Power Authority Completed with Introduction of Clean-Running Electric Vehicles for Astoria Park*

**Astoria, NY (April 9, 2008)**—Queens Borough President Helen Marshall was joined today by representatives from Clean Air Communities (CAC), the City of New York Parks & Recreation Department, and the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to unveil the final initiative in a \$2 million clean air project—nine new electric vehicles for service in Astoria Park. The Astoria Park project, funded by a \$90,000 grant from CAC’s Queens Clean Air Project in partnership with NYPA, enabled Parks & Recreation to replace gasoline- and diesel-fueled vehicles with state-of-the art electric ones, thereby achieving significant reductions in both harmful emissions and fuel consumption.

“The Queens Clean Air Project is an important component in the combined effort to reduce pollution and improve health in this county,” said Borough President Helen Marshall. “Like the trash compactors and green roof that the Queens Clean Air Project also installed in our neighborhoods, these clean vehicles help address the staggering statistics linking air pollution and diseases like asthma and cancer. I thank Clean Air Communities, the New York Power Authority, and the Parks Department for their commitment to improving our environment for today’s residents and future generations.”

Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe noted: “The Parks Department is proud to be a leader in experimenting with alternative fuel technology. After all, we are New York’s Greenest. We appreciate the generosity of the New York Power Authority and the Clean Air Communities group for giving us the opportunity to add nine new electric vehicles to the Parks fleet and reduce our carbon footprint on New York City.”

NYPA’s President and Chief Executive Officer Roger B. Kelley said: “Introducing electric service vehicles to beautiful Astoria Park is the culmination of a multi-year effort by the Power Authority and its community partners, under the Queens Clean Air Project, to bring cleaner air to the borough. Each of the five clean air projects initiated will have a lasting legacy of improving air quality and contributing to Governor Paterson’s efforts in New York State to combat global warming.”

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The project retired seven vehicles and fielded nine electric vehicles—two for passenger use and seven for utility work. Each year the retired vehicles used 821 gallons of fossil fuel and emitted nearly 15.3 tons of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. Over the expected ten-year service life of the new vehicles, the project will therefore save 8,210 gallons of fuel and reduce emissions by 153 tons. The reduction of emissions achieved by the Astoria Park project eliminates the equivalent of 118 passenger cars from the roads.

NYPA invested \$2 million in community-based energy efficiency and clean air projects in Queens under the terms of an agreement with the Queens Borough President and others as part of the construction of NYPA's 500 MW (megawatt) Combined-Cycle Power Plant in Astoria.

The Queens Clean Air Project partnership previously completed four projects:

Solar-Powered Trash Compactors (4/2005)—The placement of 50 Seahorse Big Belly solar-powered trash compactors in nine Business Improvement Districts in Queens introduced a new technology and prompted cities across the country to purchase the innovative compactors, which reduce the volume of trash by 75 percent. The units reduce litter, promote renewable energy, and improve local air quality by lowering the frequency of trash pickups by diesel-powered garbage trucks. This successful pilot project has expanded the use of the *Big Belly* in cities across the country.

Emission Controls on NYC Department of Sanitation Trucks (4/2006)—Three different types of innovative pollution controls—high-performance diesel oxidation catalysts or a combination of NOx catalysts and diesel particulate filters—were installed on 65 garbage trucks operating on residential streets in northwest Queens.

Green Roof on Silvercup Studios in Long Island City (9/2006)—In partnership with the Long Island City Business Development Corporation, New York's largest green roof was installed atop Silvercup Studios. It's a thin layer of colorful vegetation measuring about 30,000 square feet designed to help insulate the building, conserve energy and improve air quality.

Electric Ground Support Equipment at La Guardia Airport (10/2006)—The Queens Clean Air Project and Delta Air Lines teamed up to deploy the first fleet of electric ground-support equipment at one of the region's airports. The project replaced 15 diesel- and gasoline-powered baggage tractors, belt loaders, and aircraft tractors with fast-charging electric models to service the Delta Shuttle at the Marine Air Terminal. One remaining diesel baggage tug was retrofitted with an active diesel particulate filter. Over the service life of the fleet, the project saves 826,405 gallons of fuel and reduces emissions by 256.4 tons.

Taken together, the electric vehicle projects at Astoria Park and La Guardia plus the pollution controls on the sanitation trucks will annually reduce almost 750 tons of greenhouse gases and about 35 tons of other emissions, and save 62,660 gallons of fossil fuels. The green roof and solar trash compactors demonstrate new technologies that have the potential to achieve significant gains in energy efficiency and fuel savings when more widely adopted.

As CAC's Director, Debbi Edelstein, noted: "New York City has asthma rates that are among the highest in the nation, and the entire metropolitan region fails to meet federal standards for clean air. With this partnership, and the leadership of city agencies like Parks & Recreation, we have set an example for all businesses and institutions operating in the region. Today we'd like to challenge them to invest in clean air and public health by using new technologies to reduce emissions from their fleets and to conserve both energy and fuel."

## **ABOUT THE ASTORIA PARK PROJECT PARTNERS**

### **Clean Air Communities (CAC)**

CAC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to implementing air pollution reduction and energy efficiency strategies in communities that are disproportionately affected by air pollution. Since its inception in 2000, CAC has directed almost \$8 million to projects ranging from the installation of a solar roof on the Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center in Brooklyn to the retrofitting of vehicles and equipment at the South Jersey Port Corporation in Camden, New Jersey. For its groundbreaking partnership approach and impressive benefits to the community, CAC was honored with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Air Excellence Award in 2002 and with one of the first Environmental Excellence Awards from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in 2005. See [www.cleanaircommunities.org](http://www.cleanaircommunities.org).

### **Queens Clean Air Project (QCAP)**

QCAP, which was launched in 2003 with funding from NYPA, has now successfully completed its five community-based initiatives for reducing air pollution and promoting energy efficiency in the borough. In addition to NYPA, QCAP's other partners are the Northeast States Center for a Clean Air Future (NESCCAF); the Office of Queens Borough President; the Natural Resources Defense Council; and the New York Public Interest Research Group. Clean Air Communities, a regional affiliate of NESCCAF and overall project administrator, provided financial, legal, technical and management implementation for QCAP.

### **City of New York Parks & Recreation Department**

Parks & Recreation is the steward of 29,053 acres of land—14 percent of New York City—including more than 4,000 individual properties ranging from Yankee Stadium and Central Park to community gardens and Greenstreets. The Parks Department is the first New York City agency to use biodiesel (B20) for all diesel vehicles and Parks operates more than 1,300 parks vehicles using alternative fuels. Currently, 800 of Parks' 2,500 vehicles use biodiesel and more than 500 others operate on energy that ranges from electricity to solar power. Parks operates more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds, manages four major stadia, 550 tennis courts, 61 public pools, 48 recreational facilities, 17 nature centers, 13 golf courses and 14 miles of beaches. Parks cares for 1,200 monuments and 22 historic house museums. The agency looks after 600,000 street trees and two million more in parks.

### **New York Power Authority (NYPA)**

NYPA is the nation's largest state-owned electric utility and a leader in promoting energy efficiency, new energy technologies and electric transportation initiatives. It uses no tax money and no state debt as it finances operations through bonds, and revenues earned by the sale and transmission of electricity. It owns and operates 18 generating plants and more than 1,400 circuit-miles of high-voltage transmission lines throughout the state. For more information, please visit [www.nypa.gov](http://www.nypa.gov).