

College Cars Come Clean with Corn

Saint Paul, Minnesota - December 11, 2002 [SolarAccess.com] The majority of vehicles in the St. Cloud State University's central motor pool will now run on E85, an ethanol-based alternative fuel made from corn and other agricultural products.

Consisting of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline, E85 is a cleaner-burning alternative to gasoline, says the Minnesota E85 Team, which is supporting the change through a US\$5,000 forgivable loan to the university.

Currently, 17 of 22 vehicles in the University motor pool are "flexible fuel vehicles" that can run on any combination of E85 and gasoline from a single tank. The university plans to acquire additional flexible fuel vehicles as it rotates older vehicles out of the fleet.

According to Tim Gerlach, director of Outdoor Air Programs for the American Lung Association of Minnesota, Minnesota leads the nation in E85 development with more than 70 service stations now offering E85 to drivers of flexible fuel vehicles.

"E85 and flexible fuel vehicles represent yet another step in developing cleaner, renewable fuels and lessening our dependence on petroleum imports," Gerlach said. "About one million gallons of E85 will be used in Minnesota in this year, which is nearly double the amount used in 2001 and triple the 2000 totals."

The Lung Association is part of the public-private E85 Team, which recently won national honors from the U.S. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency for work in developing the Minnesota E85 market.