



## New Hybrid Technology Buses Roll Across Town

By Kurt Helin  
Editor

They look just like a normal bus — except for that thing on top.

“Along the top of the bus is a long narrow ridge, which holds the ultra high capacitors that store the energy,” said Guy Heston, assistant general manager at Long Beach Transit.

And it is that rooftop ridge that makes the 27 new hybrid buses special — they use 50% less gasoline than current buses and have lower pollution emissions than even the highly-touted liquid natural gas buses, Heston said.

Recently, 15 hybrid buses hit the streets of Long Beach, with another dozen not far behind. It is possible that by the end of the year, more than 20% of the buses on Long Beach streets could be these hybrids, Heston said.

These new hybrid buses, made by New Flyer, act like the popular hybrid cars — when idling or starting up, it is electricity that runs the vehicle, providing fuel efficiency and lower pollution. In fact, these buses have no measurable particulate matter spewing out of the back.

That is a dramatic change from the classic big-diesel-engine-in-back buses people often think of, Heston said.

Riders also will notice that these vehicles are considerably quieter, Heston said.

More than just something that is good for the environment, these new buses make

[See Calendar  
of Events](#)

[Check Out Our  
Hot Links](#)

[Mail Us](#)

economic sense for Long Beach Transit.

“We did a lot of study and we hope that is the case,” Hester said. “The upfront capital expenditure is more than an LNG bus (by about \$200,000) but if you do the lifecycle cost analysis of the bus over a 12-year span, we anticipate significant savings on fuel and maintenance.”

Grants helped defray the cost of the bus purchases. Each cost more than \$500,000.

The 40-foot buses have been out testing for several weeks. As of June 15, the first 15 were on the road and operational, Heston said. Another 12 have already arrived and as soon as driver training is complete, they will be on the street as well.

Long Beach Transit already has an order in for another 20 hybrid buses, which are expected to arrive by the end of the year, Heston said.

[\(top\)](#) or [\(home page\)](#)