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Asheville wins air quality award

Award for efforts to reduce pollution

Joel Burgess

The city recently won an award for efforts to reduce pollution. Here's a press release from Asheville:

ASHEVILLE RECEIVES AWARD FOR ACTIONS TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

City of Asheville Fleet Manager Chris Dobbins on May 6 accepted the NC Mobile Clean Air Renewable Energy (CARE) award for the city's efforts to reduce transportation emissions. The NC Mobile CARE award is the state's highest recognition for public fleets. The City of Asheville incorporates multiple clean technologies into its fleet mix for a reduction in air pollutants, greenhouse gas emissions and the use of foreign oil.

The award cited the city's leadership in the use of alternative fuels and advanced technology vehicles and named Dobbins as the driving force in this green fleet initiative. With the help of a grant, Asheville constructed the first public compressed natural gas (CNG) refueling station downtown and is converting a portion of their fleet to CNG, a clean burning, low-carbon fuel. Dobbins recently applied for and received a \$40,000 grant from the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources to fund a CNG-powered refuse truck. The city's fleet of GEM electric vehicles was the first in the region, and gas-electric hybrid vehicles have been added.

Last year Asheville City Council adopted municipal carbon emission reduction goals. Dobbins uses software from the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives to calculate and monitor the city's greenhouse emissions. Through Dobbins, the City of Asheville participates in the Land-of-Sky Regional Council's five-county Clean Vehicles Coalition and the Regional Clean Air Campaign committee.

Three state departments—the NC Department of Transportation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Department of Administration—jointly sponsor the NC Mobile CARE awards to honor the achievements of those who make a difference in the state's air quality. This is the second year the award has been given.