



---

## Missouri a Top Promoter of Renewable Fuels, 'Green' Initiatives

JEFFERSON CITY — My office has received several inquiries recently from District 2 residents who are interested in alternative fuels and I am pleased to share with them the number of ways Missouri is taking the lead as a strong supporter of alternative fuels.

Just this week, *Automotive Fleet Magazine* ranked Missouri 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation from its list of top 100 public and private alternative fuel fleets. Missouri's ranking is up from 59<sup>th</sup> in 2007 — and fourth for state government alternative fuel fleets — for our state's ongoing efforts to use more biodiesel fuel in the state vehicle fleet.

Last year's Green Power Initiative ([Senate Bill 54](#)) passed by the General Assembly required at least 70 percent of the new vehicles purchased by the Office of Administration's state fleet to be flex-fuel vehicles. Flex-fuel vehicles run on gasoline or a blend up to 85 percent ethanol. The state fleet currently has 29 hybrid electric, 2,425 E-85 (ethanol) vehicles and 2,560 vehicles that operate on biodiesel.

Missouri drivers can also expect to see additional fuel alternatives at the local gas pump soon. State officials from the Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Renewable Partners, Ethanol Promotion and Information Council, and the Missouri Department of Agriculture are initiating a pilot program allowing the sale of ethanol blends ranging from 10 to 85 percent. Several states, including South Dakota and Kansas, have already implemented similar blender pump programs.

Worldwide, there are 14 million flex-fuel vehicles on the road. Many people have flex-fuel vehicles and don't even know it. To find out if your vehicle is flex-fuel compatible, visit [www.moflexfuel.com](http://www.moflexfuel.com).

My office has also received several letters in support of using compressed natural gas as a transportation fuel. The University of Missouri-Columbia and the Midwest Research Institute are currently testing natural gas fuel technology, which has been very successful in the Kansas City area. Missouri is also testing hydrogen fuel at our first hydrogen fueling station for vehicles at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla.

As you may know, Missouri's move toward renewable fuels began in 2006 when the General Assembly signed legislation — enacted just this year — that requires all gasoline offered for sale in Missouri to contain 10 percent ethanol (E-10). Missouri is just the third state to implement the ethanol requirement. Ethanol is a cleaner burning alternative to petroleum-based gasoline and is more efficient to produce.

Missouri's Green Power Initiative that I mentioned earlier was the most important environmental legislation passed by our state in more than a decade. It decreases pollution from energy production by encouraging an increase in the use of renewable energy sources such as wind, hydroelectricity, solar power, hydrogen and biomass. It also set targets for utilities to meet: a four percent renewable energy target by 2012, eight percent by 2015 and 11 percent by 2020. The measure also allows municipal landfills to accept yard waste in order to create bio-reactors, which produce methane gas for use in energy production.

This year, the Missouri General Assembly built upon its “green” commitment by passing legislation ([Senate Bill 1181](#)) that encourages Missourians to consider environmentally responsible products and rewards their choice by creating the “Show-Me Green Sales Tax Holiday” from April 19-25.

In addition to the sales tax holiday, the measure allows 100 percent of the cost of a home energy audit, conducted by a certified energy auditor, and the costs of implementing any of the recommendations made in any such energy audit, to be deducted from a taxpayer’s federal adjusted gross income. The deduction is limited to \$1,000 per taxpayer per year and up to \$2,000 cumulative lifetime total per taxpayer.

Also, beginning July 1, 2009, the design of all state buildings over 5,000 square feet involving new construction or substantial renovation, or any building over 5,000 square feet considered for purchase or lease by a state agency, must comply with a modified minimum energy efficiency standard.

You may be interested to learn Missouri is home to the only state building in the nation — the Lewis & Clark State Building in Jefferson City — with a platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Missouri’s commitment to alternative fuels and other energy-conscious measures are very promising for growing our economy, improving environmental health and decreasing our reliance on foreign oil. We can be proud of the steps we’re taking to become a leader in alternative energy development.

If you have comments or questions about this week’s column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

###