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Porter County Sheriff's Office receives new hybrid squad cars

Project supports reduced emissions, vehicle costs

VALPARAISO, INDIANA — The Porter County Sheriff's Office on Friday celebrated the addition of 11 new hybrid squad cars to its fleet.

The Ford Police Interceptor Hybrid SUVs, acquired with the assistance of funds from the Indiana Office of Energy Development's Indiana Rural Energy Innovation grant program, will reduce harmful emissions, save taxpayer dollars and increase investments in renewable, domestic fuels.

"The Porter County Sheriff's Office has always taken pride in being proactive and progressive regarding public safety and the use of technology," Sheriff David Reynolds said. "Going with the new hybrid Police Interceptor SUVs makes the Porter County Sheriff's Office one of the first law enforcement agencies in the state of Indiana to adopt the technology and as sheriff, I am very proud of that."

Law enforcement vehicles often idle during an officer's shift. The hybrid squads, purchased from Lake Shore Motors in Burns Harbor, allow the on-board electrical equipment to be powered using the lithium-ion hybrid battery, shutting off the gasoline engine which then runs only intermittently to charge the battery.

The Sheriff's Office will fuel the vehicles with E15 from Valparaiso-based Family Express to further reduce emissions from the gasoline engines. E15 is a renewable, domestic fuel containing 15% ethanol, which is produced in Indiana.

The new vehicles will save taxpayers annually in fuel costs by using 38% less fuel and saving 44,622 gallons of gasoline per year over traditional gasoline vehicles. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, the savings equal the greenhouse gas emission reductions of removing 85 passenger vehicles from the road for one year.

"Last year, we spent approximately \$200,000 for fuel," Reynolds said. "A full fleet of hybrids will save almost \$90,000 a year. These vehicles will provide better performance and efficiency than the gasoline-powered model without sacrificing operational capability. In addition to the gas savings, the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions was important in making the change."

South Shore Clean Cities wrote the successful grant application and serves as project manager for the alternative fuel vehicle program.

“South Shore Clean Cities was thrilled to assist the Porter County Sheriff’s Department with this groundbreaking sustainable transportation project that helps improve air quality, save taxpayer dollars and support the local economy with locally-purchased vehicles and clean, domestic, Hoosier homegrown fuels,” South Shore Clean Cities Executive Director Carl Lisek said. “We hope these efforts encourage other law enforcement agencies to take similar action and applaud the Sheriff’s Department on its leadership in this project.”

The implementation of the new hybrid vehicles was assisted in part by a \$30,000 grant from the Indiana Office of Energy Development’s (OED) Rural Energy Innovation Grant program, which supports the reduction of energy consumption and its cost to businesses and taxpayers. The program funds support the increased use of alternative energy and transportation technologies and comprehensive energy planning while bolstering preparedness and resiliency in energy systems to strengthen and ensure rural growth for the future.

“OED congratulates the Porter County Sheriff’s Department efforts to transform their vehicle fleet to a more efficient, cost effective and cleaner technology option,” said Jennifer Richardson, executive director of the Indiana Office of Energy Development. “OED supported this endeavor because we believe it represents good fiscal stewardship and diversity within the energy landscape that preserves affordable, reliable and stable energy solutions for Hoosiers.”

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BY THE NUMBERS

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CUTLINE: Partners gathered at the Porter County Sheriff’s Office Friday to celebrate the addition of 11 new hybrid squad cars to department’s the fleet. Pictured (l-r) are Kathy Luther of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Tom Navarre of Family Express, Carl Lisek of South Shore Clean Cities, Jennifer Richardson of the Indiana Office of Energy Development, Porter County Sheriff David Reynolds and Don Hadley of Lake Shore Motors.

About Porter County Sheriff’s Office: The Porter County Sheriff’s Office – headquartered in Valparaiso, Indiana -- is committed to protecting the lives, property and rights of all people, to maintaining order and to enforcing the laws. The Porter County Sheriff’s Office will strive to accomplish this mission by setting goals and objectives and practicing the values of the Department. The Porter County Sheriff’s Office is responsible for the professional care and custody of those confined in its jail, the security of its courts and the prompt investigation of crime when it occurs. Learn more at www.portercountysheriff.com.

About South Shore Clean Cities: South Shore Clean Cities is a nonprofit, member-based coalition dedicated to promoting sustainable transportation in Northern Indiana. South Shore Clean Cities is one of nearly 100 U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities coalitions. The coalitions partner with members in the public, private and nonprofit sectors to increase the use and implementation of sustainable transportation and its infrastructure. The programs supported by South Shore Clean Cities and its members support domestic fuels, strengthen the nation’s energy security, reduce

dependence on imported oil, improve air quality and support local jobs and the local economy. Learn more at www.southshorecleancities.org.