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Cedar Lake police, fire departments add hybrid vehicles

Additions assisted by grant from Indiana Office of Energy Development

CEDAR LAKE, INDIANA — The Town of Cedar Lake’s police and fire departments recently added two hybrid emergency response vehicles, thanks to assistance from a grant from the Indiana Office of Energy Development.

“We’re excited to add these two new vehicles to our fleets,” Cedar Lake Fire Chief Todd Wilkening said. “As public safety professionals, we support efforts that help our residents live healthier lives. These vehicles will help improve air quality and help our citizens as well as our officers and firefighters breathe easier.”

The \$50,000 Public Safety Resilience Grant was the result of a successful application submitted on behalf of the Town of Cedar Lake by Drive Clean Indiana for the 2020 grant cycle. The projects must be complete by June 2022.

The Public Safety Resilience Grant program from the Indiana Office of Energy Development aims to enhance energy resilience through reinforcing infrastructure, technology enhancements, diversified energy resources and critical planning. The program is funded through the U.S. Department of Energy through the State Energy Program.

The departments recently received a new Ford Explorer Hybrid and a new Ford Escape Hybrid through the grant program.

The hybrid vehicles replace essential emergency equipment and reduce fuel consumption and associated vehicle emissions. Replacing the two emergency response vehicles with hybrid vehicles will keep an estimated 1,000 gallons of gasoline from being consumed.

“We hope to build confidence in hybrid technology vehicles by helping to educate the community through our example,” Cedar Lake Police Chief William Fisher said. “Seeing the vehicles perform extreme duty functions in emergency situations can serve to encourage our residents to purchase a hybrid vehicle from a local dealer, thereby helping to support the local economy and cleaner air.”

The Ford Explorer Hybrid and Ford Escape Hybrid were purchased locally from Bosak Ford Nissan Chevrolet in Burns Harbor.

“Bosak Ford Nissan Chevrolet is always happy to partner with Drive Clean Indiana to help our local fleets meet their sustainability goals,” said Don Hadley, government commercial sales manager for Bosak Ford Nissan Chevrolet. “We hope Cedar Lake’s project inspires others to follow their lead.”

Hadley also serves as president of the Drive Clean Indiana Board of Directors.

The two hybrid vehicles compliment the city’s efforts to improve air quality with cleaner fleet vehicles. Roughly 75% of the town’s vehicle fleet is E-85 compatible, which fulfills a goal set in 2008.

“Drive Clean Indiana was thrilled to assist our member the Town of Cedar Lake with their successful grant application,” Drive Clean Indiana Program Director Ryan Lisek said. “These two new hybrid vehicles will serve the departments and the citizens well with increased fuel and financial savings as well as reduced emissions for years to come. We congratulate the town on its leadership in building a cleaner fleet for all of Cedar Lake.”

Cedar Lake is a member of Drive Clean Indiana and the Indiana Green Fleet Program through Drive Clean Indiana’s partnership with the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). Drive Clean Indiana – headquartered in St. John, Indiana -- is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization managed by Legacy Environmental Services, Inc., an Indiana Certified Women’s Business Enterprise. Designated as the 71st Clean Cities coalition on June 15, 1999, Drive Clean Indiana is one of the U.S. Department of Energy’s more than 75 Clean Cities coalitions.

Clean Cities organizations support the nation’s energy and economic security by building partnerships to advance affordable domestic transportation fuels, energy efficient mobility systems and other fuel-saving technologies and practices. The coalitions achieve this in a number of ways, including the advancement of alternative fuels, alternative fuel vehicles and sustainable vehicle technologies such as electric vehicles and their charging infrastructure. The efforts reduce the nation’s dependence on imported oil, improve air quality, support local jobs, drive economic development and promote improved quality of life.

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CUTLINE: The Cedar Lake fire and police departments recently added two new hybrid vehicles through a grant acquired with assistance from Drive Clean Indiana. Pictured with the new vehicles are (l-r) Fire Chief Todd Wilkening, Assistant Fire Chief Nick Mager, Drive Clean Indiana Program Director Ryan Lisek, Police Chief Bill Fisher and Patrolman Doug Machalk.

About Drive Clean Indiana: Drive Clean Indiana is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization managed by Legacy Environmental Services, Inc., an Indiana Certified Women’s Business Enterprise. Designated as the 71st Clean Cities coalition on June 15, 1999, Drive Clean Indiana is one of the U.S. Department of Energy’s more than 75 Clean Cities coalitions and is the only Clean Cities coalition in the state of Indiana. The organizations support the nation’s energy and economic security by building partnerships to advance affordable domestic transportation fuels, energy efficient mobility systems and other fuel-saving technologies and practices. Learn more at www.drivecleanindiana.org.

About the Indiana Office of Energy Development: The Indiana Office of Energy Development (OED) was established to shepherd energy planning and policy development. OED focuses on the development and implementation of comprehensive energy planning for the state that

utilizes all of Indiana's energy resources and supports a strong, dynamic, and growing economy. To further that mission, the OED also grants funding to local communities and other entities, which is made available through the State Energy Program from the U.S. Department of Energy.