

Going Green!

First, we all should be familiar with what "green" means. Being green signifies that what we do causes little or no disruption to the environment. Using renewable resources and recycling materials make for a greener business. It also involves the amount of chemicals we release into the environment. Simply put, the saying "going Green" means becoming actively interested in taking care of our environment.

For some time now, TheBus has taken steps toward "going Green." Making environmentally friendly decisions has found its way to the top of our agenda. Procedures and practices that are strictly designed to saving money will always take a back seat to responsible actions and "doing what is right for the environment!" After all, we want our children and grandchildren to enjoy the Islands just as we did when we were growing up.

Did you know TheBus recycles everything from paper to paint thinner? Used metal parts, tires, batteries, refrigerant, solvents -- the list goes on and on. Recycling is not only the right thing to do, but it also makes for good business practices. Used materials are sorted, stored and removed in an efficient manner. This process keeps our work spaces clean and orderly. Now, that's something we all can appreciate!

The City places a great deal of emphasis on "going green". Sixty Hybrid buses were purchased with another nineteen on their way early next year. Future bus procurements will incorporate "Clean Diesel" engines. This new "Clean Diesel" engine technology is nothing short of amazing! So, coming soon, we should see even more environmentally friendly buses with "clean" exhaust stacks running the streets of Honolulu.



Natural resources, such as "energy" requires our close attention. After all, TheBus consume thousands of gallons of diesel fuel each day. To neglect this area of our business would not only be costly, but outright irresponsible. Therefore, with consideration for the broad scope of vehicle maintenance, maintenance practices are continuously being reviewed and adjusted to ensure fuel is not wasted unnecessarily. Our staff uses shorter road test routes, shorter engine idle times in the shop and compliance to on-time scheduled maintenance is at the forefront of the vehicle maintenance program.

Water-based vehicle painting -- The move to waterborne refinish basecoat is an effective solution for lowering Volatile organic compounds (VOC) emissions and thus improves air quality and our environment. TheBus has committed to a full scale training program with our paint supplier and through this partnership, the first shuttle vehicle will have been "water-based" painted. We hope to accomplish two objectives with the training and shuttle vehicle painting project. First, get our Body Shop personnel trained and familiar with waterborne painting systems. Second, use the shuttle vehicle as a "test bed" for appearance quality and product durability. If all is successful, the plan would be to switch our bus painting program to "water-based" paint. This would eliminate an estimated nine gallons of petroleum-based solvents from the painting process for each bus painted thereafter. This venture saves money and the ozone layer.

Parts cleaners utilizing petroleum solvents --You guessed it! We are now changing out petroleum-based solvent parts cleaners for more environmentally friendly "water-based" parts cleaners. After some extensive product testing, we found water-based parts cleaners work just as well as the solvent-based parts cleaners. With that being said, TheBus has made the decision to go "water-based" for the majority of all parts cleaners. This procedural change will make for a healthier work space, save the Company a few dollars, as well as further emphasize our commitment to "going Green".

The Company has shown tremendous foresight and responsibility by taking positive steps in the direction of green. Everyone can share in the pride of knowing that TheBus really does care for the people in our company, community and these precious Islands we call home.

