

FOREST PRESERVE OF COOK COUNTY GOES GREEN WITH NEW PROPANE MOWERS

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Forest Preserves of Cook County goes green with new propane powered mowers.



This July, as part of an ongoing effort to make its operations as green and economical as possible, the Forest Preserves of Cook County converted 16 new Gravely Mowers to propane power. Halloran Power Equipment Inc, Palatine IL 60074 partnered with **Metro Lawn Propane Conversions** to offer EPA Certified conversion kits for the Kawasaki engines that were used on the Gravely Mowers.

Most people already think of the Forest Preserves as being green—after all, the Preserves’ 69,000 acres account for the largest area of preserved natural areas in Cook County. But maintaining all that open space requires a lot of vehicles and fuel. These “Propane Mowers” will produce 70-80% less harmful emissions into the air. “Our overall goal is to update our fleet, making it as environmentally friendly and fuel-efficient as possible,” said Forest Preserves of Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle. “This is a benefit to our community, the environment and a value to taxpayers.”

The fuel switch will also save the Forest Preserves money. By converting to propane from unleaded gas in these 16 mowers, the Forest Preserves will save approximately \$0.89 per gallon. The use of propane also extends engine life and reduces refueling time in the field. The PERC (Propane Educational Research Counsel) conversion incentive cut the cost of conversion by \$1000 per mower, making each new mower \$826 to convert.

To fuel the mowers, the Forest Preserves is constructing nine fueling stations. The propane supplier, **AmeriGas**, will cover the entire cost of the propane tanks and related equipment.

Mike Halloran and Jim Coker spent a day educating and training the mowing staff on the proper operation and safety of these mowers. Everyone was so impressed of the power, safety and ease of use, many felt well about the many reasons and benefits for this change. “Using an American Fuel” was a huge benefit because cutting foreign oil consumption and emitting less harmful emissions made everyone proud to use these mowers.