

A New Way to Power Vessels

By Keith T. Kerman

Today, DCAS Commissioner Louis A. Molina and Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez **announced** that the Staten Island Ferry and the DOT's vessel program are now fully switching to renewable diesel fuel. The first dedicated barge, carrying 385,000 gallons, was received on June 11 at the DOT port in Staten Island. With this delivery, renewable diesel will be the primary fuel source for all DOT ferry and vessel operations.



DCAS and DOT **announced** the transition to renewable diesel in October 2024. Through June, over 1.1 million gallons have already been used in the ferry program with no operational or maintenance issues. Renewable diesel is a clear, odorless fuel that fully meets diesel fuel requirements (**ASTM 975**). DCAS is using renewable diesel produced mostly from used cooking oil, waste animal fats, soybean oil, and corn oil. It is not a fossil fuel, provides a 60% or greater reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and also offers air quality benefits.

In March 2025, DCAS **completed** a long-term contract for the barge supply of renewable diesel to the ferry. This contract utilizes the first fuel pricing index for renewable diesel in New York Harbor, signaling the growing use of this cleaner fuel on the East Coast. DOT will now receive new deliveries of renewable diesel every three to four weeks.



The City operates 129 water vessels across five city agencies and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYC EDC): DOT (ten); New York City Fire Department (FDNY) (30); New York Police Department (NYPD) (33); Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) (15); NYC Parks (three); and NYC EDC (38). NYC EDC manages [NYC Ferry](#), the public commuter ferry system. City agencies use approximately 5.5 million gallons of fuel annually, with more than 80% used by DOT. NYC Parks operates three small boats that already run on renewable diesel. DCAS and DEP are currently testing renewable diesel in one of the large sludge vessels, and DCAS is discussing similar programs with NYPD and FDNY. If all tests are successful, the goal is to fully transition all agency vessels to renewable diesel by summer 2026.

The vessel initiative follows the [completion](#) of renewable diesel use in the City's trucking and off-road fleets. The City has now successfully used over 28 million gallons of renewable diesel across fleet and ferry operations. Renewable diesel was the next step after two decades of biodiesel use in the city fleet and in city buildings as heating oil. Biodiesel is generally used in blends of 20% or less, while renewable diesel replaces all fossil diesel fuel.

Biofuel use for city operations all began in 2005 with a donation of biodiesel (B100), organized at our Annual Fleet Show and used in NYC Parks garbage trucks in Staten Island. 20 years later, biofuels are well on the way to completely replacing fossil diesel in our in-house fuel program.

Special thanks to Harris Kaplan, who manages the City's transportation fuel program and has coordinated the vessel initiative from the start. Thanks to the DCAS Procurement, BQA, and Legal teams who have worked for years on our renewable diesel initiatives: Masha Rudina, Alvin Pettway, Dan Calles, Jose

Cajas, Robina Gumbs, Scott Wagner, and Sherry Lee. Additional thanks to John Garvey, Brad Hopper, Karim Elgallad, and the entire DOT Ferries team.



Art Is Life: City Employee Artist Showcase



See visual, performance, and literary art at our [Art is Life: City Employee Artist Showcase](#) at One Art Space (23 Warren St.) in lower Manhattan!

This year's exhibition, "**Life Lessons Learned**," draws on moments of growth, resilience, introspection, and the human experience. Come by anytime during our **visiting hours**:

- Tuesday, June 24 @ 4 PM - 8:30 PM
- Wednesday, June 25 @ 11:30 AM – 8:30 PM
- Thursday, June 26 @ 11:30 AM – 8:30 PM
- Friday, June 27 @ 11:30 AM – 6 PM

Registration is recommended but not required. Visit on.nyc.gov/artislife to learn more.



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Week in Review | June 7 - June 13



Everywhere you look, we're pushing the envelope with generational plans to build a better New York City. This city was built by dreamers, and we add to their hard work every day with projects to make it safer and more affordable. And last week was no different:

- [Transforming Hunts Points](#) into a vibrant hub where deliveries from all around the world are loaded off of ships and onto barges and bikes for the last mile in their deliveries.
- Previewing summer celebrations for our city's 400th anniversary with ["Founded By NYC" events](#) from NYC Tourism + Conventions. From free movies to museums to concerts, we're marking the occasion in style.
- Crushing [hundreds of illegal mopeds](#) and announcing the seizure of over 100,000 illegal vehicles like ghost cars in the last three years to keep our streets safe.

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[NYC Fleet Newsletter 496, May 16, 2025](#): DCAS and FDNY Introduce All-Electric Paramedic Units at Annual Fleet Show

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