

Rio (Brazil) Reaches 400 (Natural) Gas Stations

Contributed by Nielmar de Oliveira
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With 400,000 thousand vehicles powered by natural gas (nation's fleet total around 1 million vehicles), Rio de Janeiro, in the Brazilian southeast, inaugurated this Wednesday, January 8, one more natural gas filling station, adding up to 400 in the city.

Natural gas filling stations are already present in 30 of the state's 92 municipalities.

According to information from the State Secretary of Energy, Shipbuilding and Oil, Wagner Vicker, natural gas already represents 22% of the state's energy matrix, which may only happen to the whole country in 2015.

Even though it is a fossil fuel, natural gas reduces toxic gas emissions in the atmosphere by 60%. This characteristic makes it a fuel in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol, which determines the reduction of toxic gas emissions by developed countries.

The director of the Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels Agency (Agência Nacional do Petróleo, Gás Natural e Biocombustíveis) (ANP), Victor Martins, speaking at a seminar at the Commercial Association of Rio de Janeiro at the end of last month, declared that there is a shortfall of natural gas for both the generation of energy and industrial use in the Northeast region, especially the state of Bahia, where the demand for more gas is "clear."

Martins explained that ANP studies show that the shortfall will be worse beginning in 2010.

One solution would be to extend the Brazil-Bolivia gas pipeline to the Northeast. "There is time to do so before 2010, but the decision has to be made now," he declared.

Meanwhile, the association of gas distributors (Abegas) reports that there is a deficit of over 16 million cubic meters of natural gas daily in the Northeast.

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