Hybrid Buses Make Dent In Fuel Bill

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The MTA is reporting that their new Orion VII hybrid buses are making a big dent fuel consumption. Orion VII hybrid buses have improved fuel economy of more than 30% compared to conventionally powered buses. In addition, the Orion hybrids significantly reduce emissions with 90% less particulate matter, 40% fewer oxides of nitrogen, and 30% fewer greenhouse gases. The MTA estimates that they saved over 1 million gallons of diesel fuel last year.

From AMNY:

> The MTA's fleet of hybrid-electric buses logged more than 10 million miles since they were first introduced a decade ago, transit officials announced Thursday.
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> The 325 hybrid buses, that are partially powered electrically, saved an estimated one million gallons of gas when compared to conventional diesel buses, the MTA said.
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> "The state-of-the art propulsion system produces lower emissions while providing a measurable fuel economy benefit," said Lawrence Reuter, president of New York City Transit.

And I would add that they are significantly quieter than the conventional diesel engine.

While this is definitely a step in the right direction, another way of improving the fuel efficiency of the bus system (Bus Rapid Transit) seems to be stuck in the mud right now - waiting for the NYC DOT to agree on the elimination of parking spaces. Buses use tremendous amounts of fuel in traffic jams.

And of course, the most efficient design would be to move to electric powered buses which

produce near zero emissions on city streets and engines that last for much longer than Internal Combustion Engines. But that seems a long way off right now (at least in NYC).