

Hydrogen generators may be a way to cut costs at the pump By Brent Stewart, The Southern

Danny Windings of Cobden sees a lot of time on the roads of Southern Illinois. As a Cornwell Tool distributor, he drives his truck all around the area.

As with many consumers, Windings has felt a pinch in his pocketbooks from high gas prices.

Recently, Windings had a hydrogen-oxygen generator installed in his truck. At this point, he estimates has been saving 20 to 25 percent on fuel costs.

"I'm very happy with it," he said.

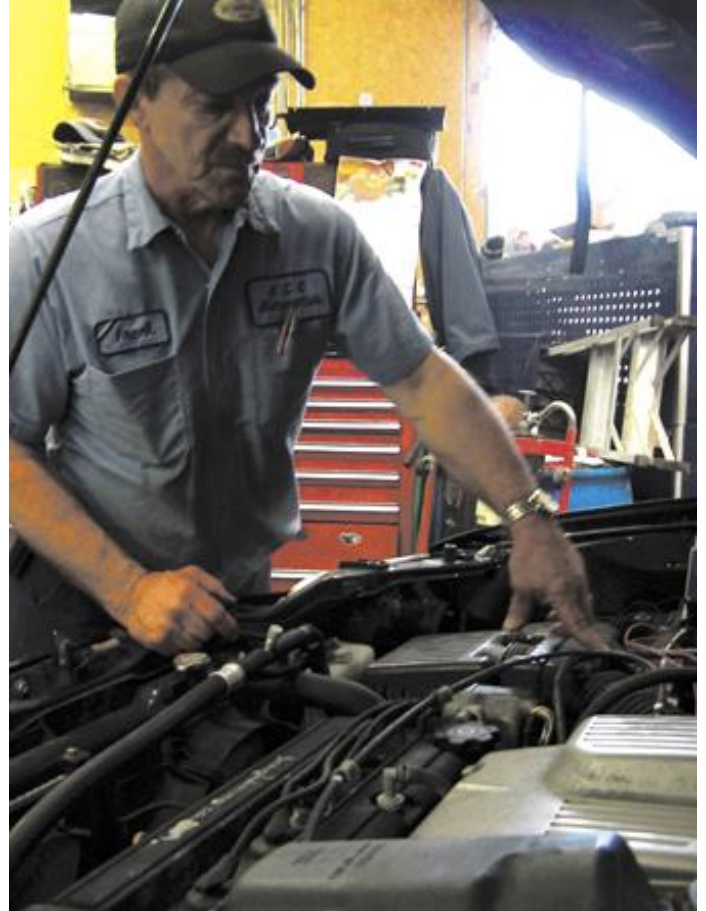
The U.S. Department of Energy has said that Hydrogen fuel cells have the potential to replace the internal combustion engine in vehicles and provide power in stationary and portable power applications because they are energy-efficient, clean, and fuel-flexible.

There are ongoing studies to make this technology cheaper and more accessible for the general public, but there are ways to harness it now.

A and G Automotive in Anna has been installing hydrogen-oxygen generators for the past year. Frank Glaub, one of the owners had been researching them and eventually constructed his own. His self-built models were efficient, but not quite what he was looking for.

"They didn't last long and were not as effective as I would have liked," Glaub said.

He continued his research to find a model on the market that was tried and true. Glaub eventually came into contact with WATEC, Inc and was impressed enough with their model; he decided to install it on his own vehicle, which he drives from Carbondale to Anna, daily for work.



"It's exciting," Glaub said. "I was spending \$8 a day, driving back and forth."

It costs around \$800 for the unit and installation. There are three hydrogen cells, and a water bottle which needs to be refilled every 200 to 300 miles.

The hydrogen-oxygen generator injects pure hydrogen and oxygen into the engine. When mixed with gas or diesel fuel, it greatly increases the efficiency at which fuel burns, and reduces vehicle emissions.

Glaub estimates he's been saving \$10 a week on fuel costs. At that rate, the unit would be paid for in a year and a half.

However, the hydrogen-oxygen generator is not for every car or every customer. The unit must be engineered and balanced for your particular vehicle and will not always work, depending on the car. It also takes about 10 to 15 minutes for it to heat up, so if you're driving short distances, the benefits are negligible.

The generator calls for a smart driver who maintains their vehicle.

"If you put the system in and neglect car care and drive like a maniac, you've just flushed \$800 down the drain," Glaub said.

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