

# Greensboro

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## Fuel saver: Filter extends life of truck, bus engines

Bruce Thomas is pitching a new oil filter that could save energy and engines.

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Diesel prices have dipped recently, but they are still about 50 cents higher per gallon than a year ago.

While he can't lower fuel prices, one High Point entrepreneur promises lower bills for gas and other maintenance for the trucking, bus and heavy equipment industry.

The answer is not a hybrid or other radical engine change. It's a filter that keeps your oil clean longer and maintains an engine's fuel efficiency.

"Test results from transit systems that have started us-

ing the system have been very positive," said Bruce Thomas, the president and CEO of Cleantechnics.

Thomas says the filter extends the mileage between oil changes from a standard 10,000 to 25,000 miles to up to 350,000 miles, depending on the age of the truck. Switching could mean saving thousands of dollars per vehicle in gas and maintenance each year, he said.

Thomas is not new to the transport industry. He comes from the Thomas Built Buses family and worked as the company's sales manager for public transit buses earlier in his career.

Company truck fleets, transit systems and heavy equipment manufacturers are Cleantechnics' main targets.

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Carmakers could come later, he said.

Larry Daniel, the president and CEO of the 25,000-member America's Independent Truckers' Association, said there is a big need for improvements in filters and filtration systems. But not every engine needs a high level of cleanliness to run smoothly, he said.

"So far nobody has come up with a system that justifies the expense," he said.

Higher oil prices mean that new technology could become more attractive, he said.

The company currently employs two people and could add another two in the next few months, Thomas said. If the company decides to manufacture the product locally, the planned number of employees could rise.

Earlier this month the Piedmont Triad Entrepreneurial Network pinpointed the company, founded in 2004, as one of 10 in the Triad with the most potential to add high-paying jobs and compete internationally.

Cleantechnics and nine other

companies will receive free business classes from PIEN and will be eligible to compete for investment money.

Other companies that have won PIEN's business plan contest include:

- Raccoon Inc., of Greensboro, a credit card fraud detection firm;
- Uzuri, of Winston-Salem, a fragrance company targeting African Americans; and
- OneKey, of Winston-Salem, which makes a car security device.

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