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County Executive

County Of Dane Office Of The County Executive

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Dane County Executive Parisi and Partners Cut Ribbon on Landfill Biogas Project's Completion This Earth Week

The Facility-the First of Its Kind in the Nation-Will Benefit Local Economies, Advance County's Clean Lakes and Air Efforts

Dane County Executive Joe Parisi stood at the county landfill today with County Board members and project leaders to announce that Dane County has officially started injecting renewable natural gas (RNG) into its pipeline, signaling the completion of its landfill biogas project. With a ribbon cutting to mark the occasion this Earth Week, the county's landfill biogas facility is now able to turn trash and cow manure into renewable fuel and inject it into the interstate transmission pipeline so it can be bought and sold to power fleets of RNG vehicles locally and across the United States.

"It's exciting to have this first-of-its-kind project reach the finish line so our area can begin to reap the financial and environmental benefits of the renewable fuel our landfill now generates," said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. "A huge thank you goes out to our partners and dedicated staff who made this possible. Dane County's landfill biogas facility and offloading station will advance our clean lakes and air efforts and also benefit Dane County taxpayers."

Dane County's landfill biogas facility will displace 3,000,000 gallons of fossil fuels in the first year of operation, with this number growing to 4,000,000 gallons per year in future years. Due to RNG having a lower carbon footprint, this is equivalent to taking 4,800 cars off the road. This is a CO₂ emission reduction equal to over 24,000,000 pounds of coal burned. In addition to the facility's environmental benefits, it is estimated that Dane County will generate enough revenue from the facility to payback its \$28 million cost of the project in just a few years.

Biogas contains about 50 percent methane and is created when garbage at a landfill breaks down. While methane is a harmful greenhouse gas pollutant, it also makes up about 98 percent of natural gas-meaning biogas can be used as a renewable energy source. Dane County's landfill biogas facility is now allowing the county to convert its landfill biogas into vehicle fuel, thereby eliminating thousands of tons of carbon emissions, a leading cause to the extreme weather events triggered by climate change.

"BIOFerm Energy Systems is extremely proud that after an extensive competitive search, Dane County chose BIOFerm, a local Madison company, to complete this one of a kind, sustainable municipal project," said Nadeem Afghan, CEO and President of BIOFerm Energy Systems. BIOFerm designed, engineered, commissioned, and provided the technology for the biogas upgrading facility at Dane County's landfill. "This project was made possible by the hardworking team at BIOFerm, the hundreds of contractors on site, and of course the dedicated Dane County Team, led by John Welch. Outside of the environmental attributes, one of many economic benefits of this project is it brought over 500 jobs to the area, and this trend will continue in years to come with the county's forward-thinking climate change agenda."

Dane County's new facility also has a biogas offloading station to allow other biogas producers, like manure digesters, to inject their gas into the pipeline. This facility is the first in the nation to be able to receive biogas from multiple off-site locations and connect that renewable gas with RNG gas stations locally and across the nation. Before being hauled to the landfill for injection into the interstate pipeline, the gas will need to be purified and compressed by the owner's equipment.

Digesters reduce greenhouse gas emissions by collecting methane that would otherwise be emitted into the atmosphere. They also help farms manage manure more responsibly, which reduces harmful runoff to lakes and streams. Due to the increased revenue opportunities for local digesters, this offloading station is expected to create an economic incentive for owners of "Cow Power" facilities in the area to convert their operations to vehicle fuel production, which will spur the development of more digesters in our area, and significantly increase Dane County's lakes clean-up efforts.

Earlier this year, County Executive Parisi announced Kwik Trip as one of the primary dispensers of the renewable vehicle fuel generated by the County's landfill biogas facility. Through Kwik Trip's partnership with Dane County, the company will now be able to dispense renewable RNG fuel from the pipeline, sell it at the company's growing list of RNG fueling stations, and power vehicles locally and across the Midwest.

"Sustainability innovation has long been a part of the culture at Kwik Trip. For that reason, we are fortunate to partner with Dane County's landfill biogas facility," said John McHugh, Director of Public Relations at Kwik Trip.

This partnership with Kwik Trip is made possible through Dane County's contract with Bluesource, a company that brings firms together to monetize renewable energy and environmental attributes to reduce and mitigate environmental impacts. As one of Bluesource's clients, Kwik Trip is able to purchase Dane County's fuel and use it for the company's operations.

The County's 2018 budget included the final phase of funding totaling \$29 million for Dane County to build the biogas processing facility at its landfill and connect it with the adjacent interstate pipeline. Of those funds, \$5.5 million went toward building the gas off-loading station for other biogas producers to inject their cleaned-up fuel. The 2018 County Budget also included a \$200,000 study to look into where additional digesters could be located to process manure into biogas.

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