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Energy Vision releases “Waste to Wheels “ A New Report on Turning Trash into Vehicle Fuel

Every year, U.S. homes and institutions throw away enough garbage, yard trimmings, farm residues, and other organic waste to make renewable natural gas, a clean, petroleum-free fuel that could power millions of the nation’s trucks and buses. Energy Vision, a national non-profit organization, with support from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Brookhaven and Argonne national laboratories, has been educating communities and business leaders on the benefits of using this renewable resource. Today Energy Vision is announcing the release of a special report to help raise its visibility and to promote its use in the U.S.

The new report, *Waste to Wheels: Building for Success*, summarizes the proceedings of a one day workshop, held in Columbus, Ohio in December. It was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Clean Cities initiative, Argonne National Laboratory and Clean Fuels Ohio. The workshop brought together 120 industry and government leaders from 29 states, who heard presentations by national experts on technologies for waste-based fuel production, projects, and financial incentives. Energy Vision’s VP for Programs Gail Richardson, a member of the planning group for this workshop, wrote up the proceedings.

Waste to Wheels discusses the characteristics of this waste-based fuel. Much cleaner than petroleum fuels, it is chemically similar to conventional natural gas and can be blended with it or used to replace it. A significant difference is that it is made, not by drilling, but by processing the waste gases created wherever organic materials are breaking down: in landfills, at sewage treatment plants, and on farm or dairy operations. Because of this, it is called renewable natural gas, referred to as "RNG" or "biomethane."

“Given the rising concerns nationally and globally about climate changing greenhouse gases, RNG deserves "center ring" attention as it is the lowest of low-carbon fuels in the world,”

notes author Richardson, “and technologies for producing RNG are commercially available. RNG is produced in Europe and used by municipal fleets in a dozen of its cities. It is just emerging in the U.S.” According to the report, communities that are now converting their bus and truck fleets to conventional natural gas for its clean air, fuel security, and fuel cost saving benefits are a step ahead in moving toward use of RNG, since the vehicles and refueling infrastructure are the same for both.

Waste to Wheels culls major points and graphics from workshop presentations, and includes information about how to spot RNG fuel production opportunities at the nation’s 1754 landfills, 16,000+ wastewater treatment plants, and 7,000 livestock farms. Speakers emphasized the benefits of RNG projects – freedom from oil, clean air, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and green jobs.

“Clean Cities coalitions and other local partnerships can be game-changers in making renewable natural gas from wastes because local agencies play a decisive role in how the nation’s wastes are managed,” says Joanna Underwood, Energy Vision’s President. “We are committed to using Energy Vision’s expertise to assist DOE Clean Cities’ affiliates with local and statewide RNG initiatives.”

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Energy Vision is a national non-profit organization that analyzes and promotes ways to make a swift transition to the clean, petroleum-free transportation fuels of the future. For more information on *Waste to Wheels*, please contact: grichardson@energy-vision.org (212 228-0225)

To read or download *Waste to Wheels*, go to Energy Vision’s website: <http://www.energy-vision.org/index.html>

For the report and for background materials and presentations from the workshop that was the basis of this report, go to DOE’s website: http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/waste_to_wheels.html