

Waste to Wheels Report Identifies Renewable Natural Gas Opportunities

A New Report on Turning Trash into Vehicle Fuel

Energy Vision, a national non-profit organization in the USA educating communities and business leaders on the benefits of using renewable natural gas (RNG) — biomethane — is drawing attention to a new report, *Waste to Wheels: Building for Success*, which summarizes the proceedings of a one day workshop held in Columbus, Ohio in December 2010. The workshop was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities initiative, Argonne National Laboratory and Clean Fuels Ohio. 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 biomethane. 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.

Energy Vision, whose activities are supported by the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven and Argonne national laboratories, points out that every year U.S. homes and institutions throw away enough garbage, yard trimmings, farm residues, and other organic waste to make this renewable resource capable of powering millions of the nation's trucks and buses. Clearly, this is a renewable fuel.

"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 biomethane are commercially available. Biomethane 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 biomethane, 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 biomethane fuel production opportunities at the nation's 1754 landfills, 16,000+ wastewater treatment plants, and 7,000 livestock farms. Speakers emphasized the benefits of biomethane 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."

The [Waste to Wheels 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.

Download Waste to Wheels summary report [here](#).

Alternatively go to the [Clean Cities website](#) for the report and for background materials and presentations from the workshop.

This article compiled using information from an Energy Vision press release.