

U.S., Canadian Bio49 initiative underway

The Biodiesel 49 Degrees Border Project (Bio49), a U.S. and Canadian initiative to reduce diesel emissions from utility trucks with biodiesel, went into full effect in January. In response to the U.S. EPA's West Coast Collaborative, an initiative working to reduce air pollution, the project will focus on vehicles operating around the Washington and British Columbia border with biodiesel through efforts from a number of local biodiesel producers and commercial fleets to make it a success. The project is named for the 49th parallel latitude that creates the two nations' borders.

Bio49 will use 144,000 gallons of biodiesel in the first year of operation, replacing 12,000 gallons of diesel fuel each month. There are currently 11 U.S. and Canadian partners in the program that will help create a market by using biodiesel in the Pacific Northwest. For example, Puget Sound Energy will be fueling all of its fleet vehicles that run along the U.S.-Canada border with biodiesel ranging from B5 to B100. Also, biodiesel processors will be built at Bellingham Technical College, where students will be trained in biodiesel production.

Eventually, biodiesel processing will be incorporated into the college's academic curricula.

A similar set-up has been spurred in Canada. BC Hydro and its partners in British Columbia will be running fleet vehicles on various biodiesel blends with biodiesel supplied by Biodiesel Works. The project, in both countries, will be managed by the Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative (NWETC). When the project is finished, NWETC will create an outreach and education program from Bio49 data with the help of the Washington Technology Center.

The Bio49 project got its start when the NWETC received a \$69,777 grant from the EPA. In addition to that, funds totaling \$280,000 will be used to run the project for one year. The NWETC is part of the Washington Technology Center that is working to create growth of the energy technology industry in the Pacific Northwest.

-Staff Report