

Isanti welcomes biodiesel facility



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By Rachel Kytonen
rachel.kytonen@ecm-inc.com

Isanti will soon break ground for a new biodiesel facility that will be the first of its kind world-showcase using the revolutionary "Mcgyan Process."

During the Isanti City Council meeting Tuesday, Oct. 16, the council unanimously approved a \$299,000 business subsidy and development agreement, and conditional use permit and site plan for Ever Cat Fuels, based in Anoka.

Community Development Director Carla Vita said the 9,000 square foot production facility will be located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Isanti Parkway East and East Dual Blvd.

Vita said Ever Cat Fuels will be initially operating the facility on a 3-acre site; however, there are possibilities for future expansion to the 4.87 acres located immediately to the north of the subject parcel.



Pictured: Isanti Planning Commission member Jeff Duncan, (left), talks with Dr. Clayton McNeff, chief science officer of Ever Cat Fuels, during a tour of Ever Cat Fuel's plant in Anoka. Photo by Rachel Kytonen

Dr. Clayton McNeff, vice president of research at SarTec Corporation and chief financial officer of Ever Cat Fuels, explained Ever Cat Fuels will be building and operating a first of its kind biodiesel production facility using the patent pending "Mcgyan Process."

The "Mcgyan Process" was named after inventors Dr. McNeff, Dr. Arlin Gyberg of Augsburg College and Dr. Bingwen Yan.

The process was developed by a sister company, SarTec Corporation, also in Anoka.

The Mcgyan Process is a new way to produce biodiesel in a fixed bed flow-through reactor that could change how the industry produces this renewable fuel.

This technology was initially developed at the University of Minnesota by Dr. Peter Carr for separation science and then conceived of for biodiesel catalysis by Dr. Gyberg and Dr. McNeff.

Dr. McNeff explained the key to this new technology is a highly efficient, heterogeneous metal oxide-based catalyst reactor that efficiently and economically converts feedstock plant oils and animal fats to biodiesel.

Dr. McNeff said benefits to the Mcgyan Process are it can use a variety of cheap feedstocks; doesn't consume the catalyst; isn't water intensive like current production methods; has virtually no waste stream; is insensitive to water and doesn't produce soap by-products; has a small foot print and can potentially be run at the farm and doesn't require large quantities of strong acids or bases.

Besides the 9,000 square foot facility, the site will consist of eight large tanks and four small tanks.

The total cost of the project is \$5 million, that covers the cost of the structure, tanks, land and infrastructure within the plant to make the product.

Ever Cat Fuels is hoping to begin construction on the facility by the end of October and begin operating out

of the new facility by June 2008.

Vita explained three, 9,000 gallon tankers will be coming and leaving the site in any given day with an output production of 3 million gallons of biodiesel fuel a year.

However, a possible expansion of the operation could result in up to 30 million gallons of biodiesel produced each year, which would equate to approximately nine trucks coming into and leaving the facility on a daily basis.

“This is a revolutionary type of way of making biodiesel fuel,” Dr. McNeff said.

Under the business subsidy agreement, Ever Cat Fuels will create at least 12 new, full time jobs with wages of at least \$15 per hour, plus benefits.

Council Member Alan Duff asked about educational opportunities for students in Cambridge-Isanti Schools as well as Anoka Ramsey Community College.

Dr. McNeff said his mother was an educator for over five decades, so educational opportunities are something very important to him.

He said he will welcome tours by students and other organizations interested in learning about the plant.

“This is a great, exciting opportunity for the region, and I’m excited about the educational opportunities for our students,” Duff said.

During a tour of Ever Cat Fuels plant in Anoka on Friday, Oct. 12, Isanti Mayor George Wimmer said the city was first approached by Ever Cat Fuels in March and he, as well as city staff, have put in hundreds of hours working on the project.

“Once this plant gets up and going it’s really going to bring in business travel, and people are going to come to Isanti to see it in production,” Wimmer said. “This is a really great opportunity for the city of Isanti and I’m very enthusiastic about this project. This is something that is very near and dear to my heart.”

Top 10 benefits of biodiesel

- Lower dependency on foreign crude oil
- Renewable
- Biodegradable and low toxicity
- Environmentally friendly
- Improvement of rural economies
- Lower combustion emission profile
- Use without engine modification
- Good engine performance
- Improved combustions because of its oxygen content
- Ability to be blended with traditional petroleum-based diesel fuel

— *For more detailed information on the “Mcgyan Process” visit www.sartec.com or www.evercatfuels.com.*

Comments

Awesome : Michelle

This is great for Isanti. Incredible work Mayor Wimmer. Keep it up. This is what we need. You are making a real difference to our city. I did not know you were so green.

October 18, 2007

MORE INFORMATION NEEDED : BRETT THUNSTROM

This sounds like a very good thing for Isanti. I'm wondering what the payback will be to the average consumer. Will the biodiesel be able to be used as home heating oil? What will the cost per gallon be? Will it be available for off-road (roadtax-free) use? What is the environmental impact of this facility to the community? I'm looking forward to hearing more about this endeavor.

October 22, 2007

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