

## The 2007 Legislature's Challenge:

# Clean Energy Solutions to Global Warming

“If Oregon can do it, other people try it.” These words, aptly spoken by Governor Tom McCall, reflect the independence, vision and pioneering spirit that have long defined our great state. It is a sentiment true to the Oregon story.

As the 74<sup>th</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly begins its work in Salem, our state's elected leaders face a set of challenges and opportunities critical to Oregon's future prosperity and quality of life. The result of their deliberations could well make Oregon a model for the nation in thoughtful environmental stewardship and economic sustainability.

Given its wide ranging impacts, notably to Oregon's natural resources, global warming is bar none the greatest environmental challenge facing our state. The moral urgency of addressing this reality head-on is clear. The opportunities incumbent in doing so should prove equally compelling.

Oregon is well-positioned to be a leader in clean, renewable energy, from wind power to wave energy. We have the resources and resourcefulness to produce cleaner, renewable fuels for our cars, trucks, tractors and bulldozers, fuels that can be produced from oilseed crops grown by Oregon farmers.

Not only will investments in these technologies drive new economic development opportunities benefiting Oregonians across our state. They will also significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions while reducing our dependence on fossil fuels

that are a major contributor to global warming.

OEC has long promoted the environmental and economic benefits of locally-grown renewable fuels (aka biofuels). We have conducted a biofuels cluster analysis with the Oregon Business Association, held Biodiesel on the Farm Workshops and helped market locally produced biofuels as a cleaner, more sustainable alternative to fossil fuels. These various efforts have proven that biofuels make good economic sense.

Oregon would stand to benefit if even a fraction of what we spend each year on fossil fuels were spent on locally grown biofuels. The billions of dollars we now send out of state each

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# A Biofuels Primer

The two primary biofuels are biodiesel, a substitute for petroleum diesel, and ethanol, a substitute for gasoline. Biodiesel is a renewable fuel produced from oilseed crops or used cooking oils and unwanted animal fats. Ethanol is a renewable fuel currently distilled primarily from corn. Ethanol will soon be produced from cellulose feedstocks, such as wood waste and agricultural residues, which are abundant in Oregon.

## How do I use biodiesel?

Biodiesel can be blended at any level with petroleum diesel. It can be used as a full replacement for petroleum diesel (pure biodiesel is called B100), but it is most commonly mixed at a ratio of 20% biodiesel to 80% petroleum diesel (B20) or 5% biodiesel to 95% petroleum diesel (B5).

Diesel engine manufacturers have approved the use of up to 5% biodiesel with no reservations about engine warranties, and some have approved higher levels. Many fleets use B20, and a number burn B100 with only minor modifications to the engine and fueling system. Biodiesel isn't just for cars or trucks. It can be used as home heating oil, to power a backup generator, you name it – if you use diesel, you can use biodiesel.

Biodiesel is great for engines – many biodiesel users experience lower maintenance costs. If you plan to burn a blend of biodiesel higher than B20 in an engine older than 1994, you may want to replace the rubber seals and hoses, but otherwise no engine modifications are required. And because biodiesel dissolves sludge that has collected in diesel engines, you'll need to clean your fuel filter several times if you start using a high blend of biodiesel.

## Does biodiesel cost more?

Just as the price of diesel fluctuates, the same is true of biodiesel. On January 18, 2007, a gallon of B20 at the SeQuential Biofuels Eugene station sold at \$2.97 and a gallon of B99 sold at \$3.29. This is biodiesel made from Oregon canola.

## Where can I purchase biodiesel?

You can fill up with biodiesel at stations all across Oregon. Visit the Columbia-Willamette Clean Cities Alternative Fuels Locator at [www.cwcleancities.org](http://www.cwcleancities.org).



## Do I need to worry about a biodiesel or ethanol spill?

The U.S. Navy and others are using biodiesel at the dock because it is nontoxic and rapidly biodegrades in water, making it an attractive fuel for use in marine environments. Ethanol also biodegrades quickly in water, although a small amount of gasoline or a bitter agent is added to ethanol to ensure that no one drinks it (it's essentially a grain alcohol).

## How do I use ethanol?

Any gasoline car can burn a blend of 10% ethanol and 90% gasoline (E10). For many years, ethanol has been blended with gasoline in the Portland and Medford areas at levels of around 10% during the winter months to reduce carbon monoxide pollution. Some fuel retailers are now offering an E10 blend year round.

There are also many vehicles out on Oregon's roads that can burn higher ethanol blends. These so-called "flexible fuel vehicles" can burn any combination of gasoline or ethanol - from 100% unleaded gasoline to 85% ethanol. Visit [www.e85fuel.com](http://www.e85fuel.com) to find out if you own

a flexible fuel vehicle. The catch is that E85 is not yet widely available to Oregon drivers. But several fuel retailers besides Sequential Biofuels plan to offer E85 in the near future. When this occurs, these locations will be listed on the Alternative Fuels Locator mentioned above.

## Environmental Impacts of Biofuels

### Do biofuels help air quality?

Biodiesel is far cleaner than petroleum diesel, with significantly lower emissions of particulate matter, hydrocarbons, sulfates and cancer-causing air toxics. Biodiesel can emit more nitrous oxide, a smog-forming compound, but biodiesel's lower hydrocarbon emissions mean that its overall smog-creating potential is 50% lower than diesel's.

Adding ethanol to gasoline decreases emissions of carbon monoxide and helps reduce carcinogenic substances in gasoline such as benzene, toluene and xylene. According to the EPA, a 10% ethanol blend can reduce benzene by 25% compared to gasoline. However, ethanol does result in slightly higher emissions of acetaldehyde. Ethanol also has a mixed impact on ground-level smog – some studies show an increase, others a decrease.

### Do biofuels mitigate global warming?

Plant-based fuels have what's called a "closed carbon cycle," which means that the carbon dioxide released when they are burned is later used by plants, which are then used as a feedstock to produce more biofuel. In contrast, when petroleum fuel is burned, it releases carbon dioxide that has been stored for millions of years. Plants are able to recycle some, but not all of the carbon dioxide released by burning petroleum. Lifecycle carbon dioxide emissions from biodiesel are 78% less than petroleum diesel. Lifecycle carbon dioxide emissions from corn-based ethanol are 35% less than petroleum diesel.

## Do biofuels save energy?

Modern U.S. corn farming makes relatively intense use of energy and chemicals, and early ethanol plants were also energy intensive, raising concerns as to whether the ethanol being produced was worth the energy going into making it. However, both agricultural producers and ethanol processors have made great efficiency gains in recent years. Nearly all recent studies of ethanol's energy balance conclude that for every unit of energy that goes into growing corn and turning it into ethanol, we get back about one-third to nearly two-thirds more energy as automotive fuel. These analyses account for all non-solar energy used to grow, harvest and process corn, and to produce ethanol in modern facilities, as well as the value an important byproduct of ethanol production – livestock feed.

Cellulosic ethanol is expected to have a much more favorable energy balance than corn ethanol, and biodiesel has a net energy gain of 220%.

OEC is pushing legislation to help make cellulosic ethanol, particularly from agricultural waste, commercially viable.

## How else do biofuels impact the environment?

Biodiesel and ethanol plants are relatively clean industries compared to oil refineries. Biofuel refineries are closely regulated, and in most states must install the best available control technologies so that air and water emissions meet stringent standards. That said, locals communities should play a role in ensuring regulatory oversight.

The pesticides and fertilizers used for corn production raise serious environmental concerns, as well as the fact that corn requires intense irrigation. Thus it's important to move quickly toward ethanol production from cellulose feedstocks. The stronger the demand for ethanol, the sooner commercialization of cellulosic ethanol will occur.

In the Northwest, canola is the major feedstock for biodiesel. It has the advantage of requiring relatively low water and pesticide inputs, and as a rotational crop for wheat actually boosts wheat yields in the following year.

Another environmental concern is the importation of palm oil to the U.S. for conversion into biodiesel. Rainforests are being chopped down to plant palm plantations for conversion into both food oil and biodiesel. OEC does not support production of biodiesel from palm oil and successfully convinced the City of Portland to require that fuel blenders not be allowed to meet the local renewable fuel standard with palm oil biodiesel.

## Shouldn't our farm land produce food instead of fuel?

Worldwide food supply and demand are primarily influenced by agricultural and export policy and the politics of food availability, not by crops grown for fuel. Given that three-quarters of the corn produced in the U.S. is used to feed animals, there is no shortage of land currently devoted to corn production that could be converted to production of crops for human consumption. An interesting examination of this issue can be found at [www.journeytoforever.org/biofuel\\_food.html](http://www.journeytoforever.org/biofuel_food.html).

There are certainly limits on producing biofuels from crops. Over the long-run, other sources must be commercialized. Already biodiesel is produced from waste oils. Soon, ethanol will be produced from cellulosic materials like switchgrass and wood waste from forest-thinning. (In the case of the latter,

we must be vigilant to ensure that the cellulose materials are derived from environmentally sound forest thinning projects.) Other means of producing biofuels are being researched and developed. One future feedstock for biodiesel might be seaweed!

## Can we completely replace petroleum with biofuels?

For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we've consumed petroleum as though it would last forever. Experts disagree about how much petroleum is left and how long it will last. They do agree, however, that less new oil will be found and that prices will increase.

In *Winning the Oil Endgame*, Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute estimates that one-fourth of U.S. oil needs could be met by a major domestic biofuels industry based on advances in biotechnology and cellulose-to-ethanol conversion.

While we can't displace all petroleum with renewable fuels, they are one important piece of reducing our dependence on a finite and dirty fuel. We must also demand more fuel-efficient vehicles and develop lifestyles and communities that are less reliant on the automobile.

*More questions? You can email me at [kevinc@oeconline.org](mailto:kevinc@oeconline.org).*

*– Kevin Considine*



A field of canola grows at the foot of Oregon's Wallowa Mountains.

# A Buyer's Guide to Biofuels

Is a car that uses biofuels right for you? As an environmentally conscious consumer, it's not always an easy decision to make.

## Biodiesel

Right now, only 4% of vehicles in the U.S. are diesel-powered. If you own one, try to use biodiesel rather than petroleum diesel, which is the worst of all possible fuels for our environment and our health (see pg. 6).

And, if you're considering buying a diesel vehicle, think about how accessible biodiesel fueling stations are for you; if they're not, you may want to wait to purchase a diesel car until the 2009 model year – at that point auto manufacturers will have to meet far stricter standards for diesel engines.

## Ethanol

What about the 96% of us who own gasoline-powered vehicles? Tens of thousands of "flex-fuel" vehicles (see list at right) that can burn either E85 or straight gasoline are already on the market.

In practice though, ethanol may be even more of a gamble. E85 is readily obtainable in Iowa, Minnesota and other Midwestern states, but currently only available at two locations in Oregon (Portland and Eugene). More stations are coming on line soon, so if you own a flex-fuel vehicle, you'll find it much easier

to fill up with E85. But think twice before purchasing a "flex-fuel" vehicle because most models that are currently available are pickups, SUVs and luxury cars, with just a handful of sedans, and nothing in the compact or economy car class.

In short, ethanol is better for air quality, but it's hard to find a fuel-efficient "flex-fuel" vehicle. So unless your job or your lifestyle requires you to have a larger, more rugged vehicle (some of which are also available in "hybrid" form, see list at right), it probably isn't your best choice, at least for now.

## Other Options

Hybrid gas-electric vehicles are all the rage these days, and are now available in everything from compact sedans, such as the Toyota Prius, to full-scale SUVs, like the Ford Escape. Of course, even though they are twice as fuel-efficient, they still burn petroleum; none of them currently can burn either ethanol or biodiesel (though one carmaker is planning to come out with a biofueled hybrid in the next couple of years). And not all hybrids are created equal: some larger models still consume significant quantities of fuel even though they are technically hybrids.

Other good choices exist – PZEVs, or partial zero-emission vehicles, include not only hybrids, but several other makes and models. Check under the car's hood to find out not only the gas mileage, but also its emissions rating.

## The Bottom Line

See? We told you that buying a "green" car is not an easy choice to make. It clearly depends on your own priorities, values and gut instincts. If you're big on energy independence, or worried that continued reliance on imported oil could push gasoline prices through the roof, you may want to buy a diesel – provided you have ready access to biodiesel.

Otherwise, you may want to buy a hybrid – as long as it's fuel efficient compared to other options.

Or, it may be that hanging on to the vehicle you already own – e.g., in my case, my banged-up '86 Toyota pickup with 140,000 miles on it – is better for the environment than sending it to the junkyard and investing in two tons or more of newly forged steel and aluminum, particularly if your current car gets reasonably decent gas mileage.

– Kevin Kasowski



The McIntyre family of Portland burns biodiesel in their VW.

### Flex-Fuel Vehicles:

Six major automakers offer "flex-fuel" vehicles in some of their 2007 models. Be sure to check with your dealer though, since only certain engine types used in each model may be flex-fuel compatible. You can also check the VIN to confirm.

**GM:** Silverado, Impala, Monte Carlo, Express, Uplander; Sierra, Avalanche, Suburban, Tahoe, Yukon, Savana; Relay; Terraza

**Ford:** Crown Victoria, F-150, Lincoln Town Car

**Daimler-Chrysler:** Durango, Ram, Aspen, Commander; Grand Cherokee, Dakota, Caravan, Sebring

**Mercedes:** C230 Sedan

**Mercury:** Grand Marquis

**Nissan:** Titan, Armada

# Oregon's Biofuels Pioneers

Many Oregon businesses are choosing biodiesel for their day-to-day operations – in fact, the good news is that there are too many to include in the short profiles below. For a longer list, you can visit the “Users” section of our biofuels website ([www.biofuels4oregon.org](http://www.biofuels4oregon.org)). And, if your business or organization is using biodiesel and would like to be profiled there, please email [kevinc@oeconline.org](mailto:kevinc@oeconline.org).

## Argyle Winery

Award winning Argyle Winery of Dundee began fueling its 12 tractors and one utility vehicle with a biodiesel blend in the spring of 2005. Vineyard manager Mark Sheridan cites reducing foreign oil dependency, cutting air pollution and increasing the company's green image as major factors leading to the fuel switch.

Sheridan reports that no problems have surfaced in their equipment as a result of biodiesel use. Argyle winemaker Rollin Soles is enthusiastic about the company's switch to the renewable fuel and hopes others will follow: “It's a great thing to do. I would encourage anyone with a diesel engine to use it. It not only supports farming, it will help release us from the shackles of foreign oil.”

## Green Energy Transportation & Tour, LLC

You can drive a bus and still be green. John Flannery's Green Energy Transportation & Tour provides Bend-area tour, shuttle and charter services in its 12-passenger biodiesel-powered bus. Flannery says he did some alternative fuels research prior to deciding to run his bus on biodiesel. Ultimately, he says, he chose biodiesel because it is based on a renewable resource, is domestically produced and, therefore, provides domestic jobs. Reducing harmful emissions was also a priority for Flannery.

## Kettle Foods

Potato chip giant Kettle Foods is supporting the growth of the biodiesel industry from both ends. The company supplies its used vegetable oil to a new biodiesel production plant in Salem for refinement into biodiesel fuels usable in unmodified diesel engines. Since the company uses sunflower and safflower oils to make its chips, Kettle calls the resulting biodiesel “Flower Power.” On the consumption end, Kettle has used such refined biodiesel to fuel three of its corporate vehicles – all Volkswagen New Beetles – since early 2004.



## Organically Grown Company

As the largest wholesaler of organic fruits, vegetables and herbs in the Pacific Northwest, the Organically Grown Company makes a lot of pick-ups and deliveries. In line with their commitment to the environment and local farming, OGC uses a biodiesel blend in their delivery trucks, tractor trailers and refrigeration units. OGC's Chris Petrick identified support for the transition to renewable fuels, lowering company emissions and encouraging production and use of domestic fuels as reasons why they chose to make the fuel switch.

## Tyree Oil, Inc.

As a distributor of petroleum products, Tyree Oil has joined the wave of the future by offering biodiesel to its customers. Since 2002, Tyree has used the fuel itself, filling up part of its fleet of

company pickups with a biodiesel blend available through their on-site cardlock. Tyree Oil's Tim Reed says the company decided to use the fuel in their own trucks to reduce emissions, have cleaner running engines and lessen their dependence on oil from the Middle East. Reed is enthusiastic about how biodiesel has performed in the trucks, remarking that “quite the contrary” to having problems, the vehicles “seem peppier.”

## Mountain Measurement, Inc.

As a consulting firm which aims to advance the theory and practice of scientifically sound measurement and alternative research methods, Mountain Measurement is “out to show that business can be a positive force for sustainability.” Founder Brian Bontempo began fueling his corporate sedan with pure biodiesel in the summer of 2003. He cites better engine performance, support of the company's mission on sustainability and the social issues surrounding the war in Iraq as reasons behind his decision to make the fuel switch. Even though he uses B100 year-round, Bontempo reports that he has not had a single problem with running his car on the veggie-fuel.

# Can Biofuels Make Us Healthier?

Most of the buzz about biofuels has been focused on their ability to help curb global warming, or the potential for struggling farmers and rural communities to cash in on new "homegrown" crops that also help wean us off of foreign oil.

Often overlooked is that embracing biofuels bodes well for our health, too. Of course, we're not suggesting that anyone drink ethanol (i.e., grain alcohol) to cure what ails them. In fact, the small amounts of petroleum that do exist in ethanol are added only to make sure no one does.

And just because the exhaust from biodiesel made from used cooking oil smells like French fries, don't try using it as a dipping sauce at your next cookout.

But using more biofuels in our cars, trucks, boilers and home oil furnaces will keep us healthier because it will cut a wide range of air pollutants that now contribute to asthma, other respiratory illnesses, and even more serious diseases such as cancer.

For example, recent media attention has show-cased how levels of benzene, a cancer-causing chemical linked to leukemia in adults and children, are twice as high in the gas we Northwesterners burn and twice as likely to cause cancer, compared to the nationwide average. Long-term benzene exposure also affects bone



Biofuels can help us all breathe a little easier.

marrow, can cause anemia, chromosomal damage and excessive bleeding, and makes the immune system more susceptible to infection.

OEC is currently pushing the EPA to strengthen benzene refining requirements in the Northwest to reduce this threat. To get involved, visit [www.oeconline.org/kidshealth/benzene](http://www.oeconline.org/kidshealth/benzene).

Using ethanol will help, as a 10% blend can reduce benzene emissions by 25% or more.

"Dirty diesel" made from petroleum contains not only benzene, but as many as 40 different hazardous air pollutants (several of which are known carcinogens, including benzene), as well as soot particles that can lodge directly in our lungs and aggravate asthma.

By comparison, 100% biodiesel emits 30-50% less soot, half the smog-forming compounds, and 75-90% fewer carcinogens than petroleum diesel.

In addition to encouraging the use of biofuels as a healthier alternative, OEC is supporting legislation in the 2007 State Legislature to put cleaner school buses on the road, which will protect our kids from harmful diesel emissions.

To be sure, biofuels aren't a panacea for air quality problems – they still emit pollutants, only less of them – but they are clearly a step in the right direction of enabling all of us to breathe a little easier.

You can learn more about biofuels at [www.biofuels4oregon.org](http://www.biofuels4oregon.org), a website created by OEC.

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# Join OEC at a 2007 Event or Workshop Near You!

Each year, OEC hosts a dozen or more events throughout Oregon, on a diverse range of environmental topics related to business, health, or agriculture. Our 2007 forums are already under way; we hope you can join us at one or more upcoming events!

For more detailed information and to RSVP, call 503-222-1963 ext. 106, or visit our website at [www.oeconline.org](http://www.oeconline.org).

We hope to see you soon!

## Agriculture and Environment Workshops

### *Locally and Sustainably Grown Food Markets*

February 23, 2007 (Sixes)

Farmers and "foodies" (you know who you are!) won't want to miss this event where speakers will discuss new markets for locally and sustainably grown farm products and the role of regional identity, third-party certification, processing, distribution, and marketing. (This event will be repeated later in the spring in the Willamette Valley and Central Oregon; check our website [www.oeconline.org](http://www.oeconline.org) for updates.)

### *Northwest Grown Fuels: Biodiesel and other Sustainable Fuels*

March 1, 2007 (Roseburg Library, Noon to 5)

Biofuels present Oregon some unique opportunities to create new markets for Oregon agricultural communities. Some small biofuels business clusters have the potential to play a larger role in sustainable agricultural while diversifying Oregon's renewable fuel economic base. Learn about what biofuels crops can be grown in Oregon and where; how SeQuential Biofuels can turn waste oils into renewable fuels that are pumped and distributed locally to stations throughout the state; and what technology and market incentives are needed to turn biomass and agricultural products into ethanol fuel.

## Healthy Environment Forums

### *Environmental Challenges to Reproductive Health and Fertility*

Thursday, March 22, 2007 (Portland)

A number of reproductive health disorders, including infertility, pregnancy loss, early puberty, reproductive tract abnormalities, and cancers, are associated with environmental contaminants. Rebecca Sokol, MD, MPH, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Medicine, at USC, will discuss the latest science and the implications for public health and patient care.

### *Health Costs of Pollution: Is an Ounce of Prevention Worth a Pound of Cure?*

Thursday, April 12, 2007 (Portland)

Much of the blame for increasing health costs has been placed on rising drug costs or increasing malpractice insurance rates – but there's another factor that has gotten less attention: pollution. Kate Davies, MA, PhD, Professor and Associate Director, at Antioch University, who conducted a study of the economic costs of environmental disease in Washington State, will speak of her findings and the implications for Oregon and disease prevention.

Thank You to Our Healthy Environment Forum Supporters

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## Forum for Business and the Environment

As we go to press, we're wrapping up planning for our 2007 Forum for Business and the Environment series. We've invited the "Governator" (Arnold Schwarzenegger) himself, as well as business luminaries such as Silicon Valley venture capitalist Vinid Khosla, to come to Oregon to headline our 2007 series. Detailed information on these events will be available on our website [www.oeconline.org](http://www.oeconline.org) by the time you read this, or feel free to call 503-222-1963 x. 106 if you'd like to receive a brochure for our 2007 Business Forum series.

# The 2007 Oregon Legislature's Challenge

(continued from front page)

year for foreign oil would be reinvested in our communities, benefiting the state's economy many times over.

Oregonians would be healthier as a result. Biodiesel has significantly fewer emissions of harmful particulates and air toxics, such as benzene. These pollutants disproportionately impact our children's health and can lead to upper respiratory illness, asthma and even cancer.

These are all key reasons why OEC is urging our state legislature to provide new incentives for locally produced renewable fuels. We are already hard at work this session advancing legislation to establish a statewide standard requiring the blending of biofuels in gasoline and diesel. This would make biodiesel and ethanol available at filling stations across the state. Oregon would join only two other states – Minnesota and Washington – in enacting such a standard.

In tandem with this renewable fuels standard, OEC is strongly supporting new incentives for renewable energy production, from wind to solar to wave power, with the bold intent of meeting

25% our energy needs with renewables by 2025.

Taken together, this Oregon-grown clean energy strategy will go a long way in addressing the challenges of global warming, all the while spurring new economic opportunities that will make our state stronger and more prosperous. If enacted by our legislature, Oregon would stand out as a model of responsible environment stewardship, if not a key exporter, of clean energy, technology and innovation.

At OEC, we welcome this opportunity and the chance to once again test that old notion that if Oregon leads, the nation will follow.

– Lindsey Capps



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