

# Port of Vancouver, USA first to step up to biodiesel challenge

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The Port of Vancouver, USA is one of the first ports in the United States to replace regular diesel fuel with environmentally-friendly biodiesel for use in almost all of its own vehicles and heavy equipment. Biodiesel is a cleaner-burning diesel fuel made from vegetable oil, including recycled cooking oil. While pure biodiesel contains no petroleum, it can be blended with petroleum diesel to create a biodiesel blend.

## B20

The Port of Vancouver is using a combination 20 per cent biodiesel blended with 80 per cent regular diesel, called 'B20.' Use of B20 biodiesel can result in a reduction of emissions by up to 20 per cent, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"One of the key tenets of our mission is to be a leader in environmental stewardship," said Larry Paulson, Port of Vancouver, USA Executive Director. "In addition to reducing emissions in our work environment, this change will help support a new market for Washington agricultural products and reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil."

Last April, Washington legislators passed a law that requires all state agencies to use a minimum of 20 per cent biodiesel for state fleet vehicles by 2009. The Port of Vancouver was the first public port in the state to implement a programme for compliance.

## Structured phase-in key to switch

Close monitoring of vehicle fuel filter systems and a process to phase-in the conversion from regular diesel to biodiesel in port vehicles was key to successfully making the switch to the alternative fuel, according to Mark Savage, the port's lead mechanic.

Savage said the carefully structured process of extra filtration and increased replacement of equipment filters prevented problems for vehicles, such as clogged fuel lines and engine malfunctions that other companies have experienced when making the switch to biodiesel. Because the biodiesel acts as a solvent, it can dislodge sediments that have built up in vehicle fuel tanks from the use of regular diesel. By gradually increasing the percentage of biodiesel in the fuel blend and changing filters more frequently, clogged fuel lines and other impacts to the engine can be prevented, he explained. The process for complete conversion to B20 biodiesel in the average vehicle at Port of Vancouver took about 12 weeks or 100 to 200 gallons of fuel.

According to Tom Verry, Director of Outreach and Development for the National Biodiesel Board, Port of Vancouver, USA is the first port to make the switch to biodiesel for all of its diesel vehicles and equipment.

The Port began its conversion programme in late March and by July had successfully completed the switch to B20 for all of



A hybrid Ford Escape, biodiesel trucks and heavy equipment are part of the port's plan to use alternative fuel, reducing both emission pollutants and dependence on foreign oil.



Port of Vancouver, USA is the farthest inland deep-water port on the Columbia River, 106 miles from the Pacific Ocean. With four terminals and 12 berths, the port specialises in handling autos, bulk, breakbulk and special project cargo and provides immediate access to interstate rail and highways.

its diesel-fueled vehicles and heavy equipment, including about two dozen trucks, tractors, cranes, loaders, an excavator, backhoe and Tamper Canon. Estimated annual fuel usage is 10,978 gallons for 2006. That number could increase to 16,228 in 2007 with the addition to the Port's vehicle fleet of a Liebherr LHM 500S heavy lift crane, the largest mobile harbor crane in North America. In making the purchase, the port required that the new crane be biodiesel compatible, to comply with its renewable fuels programme.

### Guaranteed fuel supply critical

Equally important in making the switch was ensuring an adequate supply of biodiesel fuel to meet the Port's needs. That requirement was satisfied by an agreement with local supplier Carson Oil Company, which sealed a distribution deal last May to bring 15 million gallons of biodiesel a year into the region. Appropriately, the biodiesel will be arriving at the region's first biodiesel terminal located at the Port of Vancouver.

The Port has also purchased two trucks with ethanol capability and all future vehicles and equipment will be equipped to run on

some form of alternative fuel, whether that is biodiesel or E-85 ethanol, a fuel derived from crops like corn and sugar cane.

Both alternative fuels are considered 'energy positive,' which means these fuels yield more energy than the power required to produce them. Additionally, the state of Washington hopes that this legislation will spur economic growth through the development of a homegrown biofuels industry, including the growth of biofuel oilseed crops and the construction of biofuel processing plants.

Biodiesel has become even more attractive to the Port of Vancouver given the fact that the price of a gallon is now competitive with regular diesel. "With the recent rise in oil prices, using biodiesel makes economic as well as environmental sense," said Curtis Shuck, the port's Director of Facilities.

The Port of Vancouver USA, created by Clark County taxpayers in 1912, is one of the major ports on the Pacific Coast. Its competitive strengths include available land, versatile cargo handling capabilities, vast transportation networks, a dependable labour force and an exceptional level of service to its customers and community.

#### ABOUT THE PORT

The **Port of Vancouver, USA**, is a multi-purpose port authority located in Vancouver, Washington along the banks of the Columbia River. The Port of Vancouver, USA, has much to offer companies looking to expand or relocate in the Pacific Northwest. The Port has over 1,000 acres for expansion and development for heavy and light industry, manufacturing, distribution warehousing, research and business-park uses. The Port also has versatile cargo handling facilities, skilled labour force, personal customer service, and extensive transportation networks. The Port's convenient hub of marine, rail, highway and air cargo transportation connections offer real competitive advantages. The Port of Vancouver, USA, has handled a variety of bulk and breakbulk cargoes since 1912.

#### ENQUIRIES

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