

Landfill Gas to Build Cars and a Greener Community

March 24, 2014

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GEORGETOWN, Ky. (MARCH, 24 2014) – Can a car company be a vehicle for change? Toyota thinks so. The Kentucky plant that manufactures some of the greenest cars on the road, including two hybrid models, will soon be powered in part by green electricity.

Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc. has teamed up with Waste Services of the Bluegrass to generate power from local landfill waste, marking the region’s first business to business landfill gas to energy initiative. Toyota estimates the locally-generated landfill gas will supply enough power each year for the production of 10,000 vehicles.

How it Works

As solid waste naturally breaks down in a landfill, it creates gas. A network of wells at the landfill will collect and prepare this gas, which will be used to fuel generators for electricity. Underground transmission lines will then carry the electricity to Toyota’s manufacturing plant, located a few miles south of the landfill.

What’s Next

Construction begins in April, and is expected to be complete by early 2015. Once up and running, the system will generate one megawatt of electricity per hour, or about what it takes to power 800 homes, based on average consumption in the U.S. Additionally, landfill greenhouse gas emissions will be cut by as much as 90 percent, which adds up to better air quality for the local community.

“As a corporate citizen of central Kentucky, we are committed to smarter and better ways of doing business to enhance our community and environment,” said Todd Skaggs, CEO of Waste Services of the Bluegrass. “We look forward to being a partner in Toyota’s sustainability efforts.”

Big Picture Thinking

This isn’t Toyota’s first non-traditional approach to environmental stewardship. Since 2006, the Kentucky plant has been a “zero-landfill” facility, which means waste generated at the plant gets repurposed instead of getting rejected.

Some of the waste goes into a composter, located on the plant’s 1300-acre campus. The compost generated is used to fertilize an on-site garden, which has supplied more than 11,000 pounds of produce, or the weight equivalent of 3.5 Camrys, to a local food bank.

And, that’s not all. Toyota is investing in a number of sustainable initiatives, locally and globally. “At Toyota, we believe earth-friendly cars are just the beginning,” said Jeff Klocke, facilities and environmental manager. “Together with our community, we think we can contribute to a greener world.” Learn more about Toyota’s environmental initiatives in the company’s latest environmental report:

<http://www.toyota.com/about/environmentreport2013/index.html>.

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