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Latest News:

Landfill Gas Powering GM's Fort Wayne Truck Plant

Automaker Partners with Serv-All and Toro Energy on Innovative Recycling Program That Reduces Pollution and Costs

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (May 8, 2002) -- The latest example of General Motors' energy savings initiatives was demonstrated today at its [Fort Wayne Assembly Plant](#). The company is using methane gas collected from decaying garbage at Serv-All's landfill on McBeth Road to reduce the amount of natural gas burned at the plant. Toro Energy installed the collection system and over eight miles of piping required to transport the gas to the plant's boilers.



GM and Fort Wayne community officials celebrate the opening of the methane gas line into the facility

"Methane gas is a clean-burning fuel and is a perfect power source for the plant's giant boilers," said Dave Shenefield, site utilities manager for the Fort Wayne Assembly Plant. "GM's Fort Wayne plant has always built world-class trucks, but now it's being done in a more economical and environmentally friendly way"

Preserving the nation's energy resources is more than just a noble goal for General Motors, the world's largest automaker. GM's many projects aimed at saving energy include recruiting the help of the corporation's more than 200,000 employees in North America. The savings amounted to \$140 million in 2001 compared to 1995 levels and contributed directly to GM's bottom line, helping the company weather the latest economic recession, according to company officials.

GM Group Director of Utility Services Joe Bibeau explained to reporters and invited guests at the Fort Wayne plant, today, that the landfill gas recovery system is only one of the energy savings projects underway at the Fort Wayne truck plant. He also said that all GM plants, worldwide, shared in the efforts to reduce energy use and eliminate waste of all kinds, wherever possible.

Several years ago, GM committed to reducing total energy usage by 25 percent from 1995 levels in the U.S. by the end of 2005, Bibeau said. "We were already over 17 percent by the end of last year and are well on our way to the goal. Those reductions must be achieved even with the increases in energy intensive processes, floor space, and production that have occurred since 1995," he said. He added that the commitment

also applies to the amount of energy used to produce each vehicle, so fluctuations in production volumes are taken out of the equation.

Bibeau credited much of the improvement in energy savings to top-down support and bottom-up conservation implementation. "The approval and commitment from the highest levels of the corporation is essential to getting it started," he said, "but actual implementation only comes with the participation of every employee."

Bibeau told the group that GM had implemented a program called the GM Corporate Energy Sufficiency Process at 46 manufacturing locations in the U.S. by the end of last year. He said it would be spread across all 73 major manufacturing facilities in the U.S. by the end of this year.

The program focuses on individual employees taking responsibility for energy conservation in their own work area. It includes turning off idle equipment, lights and fans when not needed, and identifying leaks of any kind. "Any leak is a waste of energy," Bibeau said. "It could be a process air leak, a dripping fitting, or a crack that allows heat or cooling air to escape from the building."

The energy sufficiency effort resulted in savings of \$14 million last year, alone, and is estimated to be worth \$21 million per year when all plants are onboard.

Other examples cited by Bibeau included:

Green Lights - a joint project with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to replace existing plant lights, primarily fluorescent fixtures with energy efficient T8, sodium vapor and metal halide lamps that maintain at least the same level of lighting but use less energy. The new lighting system is being implemented in nine plants for a projected savings of \$4 million per year. Over the next three years, all major plants will be completed, resulting in \$16 million in annual savings.

Energy Star® - GM was recently selected by the U.S. EPA as the only industrial company to be named the Energy Star® 2002 Partner of the Year. The award was presented to GM corporate leadership by Christie Whitman, administrator of the EPA, in ceremonies in Washington, D.C. GM is the only automotive company to ever have received the award, which was based on the corporation's overall energy efficiency in its manufacturing plants, nationwide.

Each of the projects has side benefits for the communities in which the plants operate, Bibeau said. "The joint landfill gas project provides an economic benefit for the greater Fort Wayne community by capturing and using the methane gas, which would normally just be burned off at the site, wasting a valuable resource" As a result of the local partnership, methane created at the landfill is captured then delivered via a network of pipelines to the GM plant, where it's burned for fuel.

General Motors, Serv-All, and Toro Energy LLC, of Dallas, developed the project in a true partnership. Toro installed the eight-mile pipeline used to deliver the methane gas from Serv-All's MacBeth Road Landfill to the plant. To burn the methane, Toro also modified a boiler at the plant. Serv-All installed the wells and the collection system necessary to capture the methane.

The GM facility receives approximately 16% of its energy needs via the methane gas from the Serv-All Landfill. Usage in the powerhouse, alone, as a replacement for natural gas used to fire the boilers, is as high as 70 percent, according to Shenefield. GM's cost savings at the plant as a result are anticipated to be more than \$500,000, annually, he said.

"It is nice to work with companies like General Motors and Toro Energy , who recognize the value of utilizing this energy source," said Gregg Walbridge, Serv-All's landfill Project Manager. "It offers a great opportunity to help both the environment and the economy."

"The completion of this joint project reinforces General Motors' commitment to the environment, not only on the corporate level, but on the local level, as well," Bibeau said.

This is the third General Motors plant to utilize landfill gas as an energy source. The Fort Wayne Assembly Plant welcomed the challenge of using this type of environment-friendly energy at the plant. In 1999, General Motors, together with Toro, received the EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program of the Year Award for the General Motors Lake Orion landfill gas project. A similar system also is operating at the GM Powertrain plant in Toledo. Bibeau said General Motors is currently considering creating similar partnerships at other GM sites.

More information about GM's energy and environmental activities at the Fort Wayne plant, as well as all of [GM's major manufacturing centers](#) in the U.S., is available on the Internet at www.gmability.com.

GM's Fort Wayne truck assembly plant builds the award-winning Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra full-size pickup trucks. The facility employs approximately 3,000 people.

