

Green Dining Network selects city as site for new processing plant

By ELIZABETH JACKMAN
STAFF WRITER

About 1,000 local restaurants are currently part of the Green Dining Network, an environmentally friendly company, that offers a win-win solution for everyone.

By law, restaurants cannot dispose of their used cooking oil (also known as WVO, waste vegetable oil) down the drain, with options being to sell it for other applications such as cattle food, or pay a service to come and take it away.

“We will pick it up for free and recycle it and turn it into environmentally friendly bio-diesel fuel,” said President and CEO of the Green Dining Network Marv McCarthy.

The company was founded in the fall of 2007 by Mark Hinkle and his nephew Rick Katt, who brought McCarthy in last year as a consultant when



Photos by Elizabeth Jackman

President of Green Dining Network, Marv McCarthy, left, and yard manager, Dick Pickett stand in front of some of their vegetable oil processing equipment at their new plant in downtown Glendale.

the company was going through a rough patch.

One of his first orders of business was to find a partner to sell their purified cooking oil that would produce the bio-diesel fuel and the second was a location for their processing plant.

“We found the perfect spot, right here in Glendale at 58th Drive and Ocotillo Road. It is 14,000 square feet, surrounded by a block wall with large gates to drive in the trucks and lots of room to expand,” McCarthy said. “We worked with an economic development representative from the city, Bob Lamb. It has been a real pleasure working with the city. Glendale has a real commitment to going green. We are excited to be here.”

They also found the perfect partner in Ameresco BioFuels, located in the far West Valley near the Hickman Chicken Ranch. It is Arizona’s first and largest bio-diesel producer.

McCarthy explained how their operation

works. “We have two 1,500 gallon pumper trucks. We place containers at the restaurants and pick them up, all free of charge,” McCarthy said. “The trucks will bring the WVO to our facility, where it is filtered and purified. It is a lot more to it than most people think.”

Once the oil has been cleaned, it is delivered to Ameresco for processing. They produce about one million gallons per month of bio-diesel fuel.”

Benefits to burning the bio-diesel fuel, McCarthy said, is that emissions are way less than regular diesel.

“As a rule of thumb, every one million gallons is the equivalent of taking 1,000 semi-trucks off the road,” McCarthy said. “It is the only fuel approved by the EPA and Department of Transportation as a replacement for diesel fuel.”

He said the diesel fuel emits one of the same carcinogens found in cigarette

smoke, whereas bio-diesel fuel has no carcinogens.

Currently, most of the bio-diesel fuel is sold to fleets, such as school districts for buses, but they are working on adding pumps at service stations in the future.

“Any vehicle that operates on diesel fuel can run on bio-diesel,” McCarthy said.

Benefits to restaurants to participate are threefold, McCarthy said. Green Dining recycles their oil for an environmentally friendly purpose, helps them reduce their operating expenses by partnering with vendors who provide support services such as maintenance and repairs, and increase their profits by promoting diners to eat at their restaurants, who support environmentally friendly businesses.

“One of the cool things about bio-diesel, is that a main by-product is glycerin that can be used in water processing plants because it promotes the growth of healthy bacteria

MORE GREEN ON A5



Marv McCarthy points to some of the containers his company provides to restaurants free of charge to dispose of their used cooking oil so it can be recycled into environmentally friendly bio-diesel fuel.

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FORECLOSURE

GUHSD would have to cut \$7.2 million if override fails

By CAROLYN DRYER
EDITOR

Glendale Union High School District is one of four school districts in Glendale holding an override election Nov. 3.

GUHSD has been on an override since 1990.

"This is a renewal to support academic and extracurricular activities," Administrator of Finance and Legislative Affairs Gene Dudo said.

Dudo said a blue-ribbon 80-citizen committee studied the budget, charged with the responsibility to look and see how the district spends the money and where it would have to make cuts if the override fails to pass. The committee's work was completed and was presented to the Legislature.

"They did recommend the override," Dudo said.

If it does not pass, Dudo said, the district budget would have to be cut by \$7.2 million (the amount being asked for in the override renewal). Last year, the district cut its budget by \$2 million and cut \$10.5 million this year. He said the Legislature's version of the state budget would cut another \$1.5 million.

When Dudo spoke last week, Gov. Jan Brewer

If the override fails, "cuts would be deeper, more severe," GUHSD Administrator of Finance and legislative Affairs Gene Dudo said, adding, "It's going to be devastating to academics and athletic programs."

had approved budget items related to state properties, general government, higher education, health and welfare, and the Department of Public Safety budget. She vetoed HB 2011, K-12 education, which would have eliminate cuts to K-12 education, SB 1025, general revenues, and HB 2006, appropriations, which eliminated cuts to K-12 and Department of Economic Security.

The governor also proposed a special session to finalize budget language for those agencies whose budgets were listed in SB 1025. No date had been set as of Friday about when the House and Senate would hold those sessions.

To learn more about the governor's bill signings and vetoes, visit www.azgovernor.gov.

"All these things come together and converge," Dudo said.

If the override fails, he said the committee recommended larger class sizes and a reduction of admin-

istrative and support staff. But that has already been done, Dudo said.

If the override fails, "cuts would be deeper, more severe," he said, adding, "It's going to be devastating to academics and athletic programs."

Dudo said the district is looking at the override as not being optional, but essential to GUHSD operations.

He said the \$7.2 million is not a new tax increase, but a renewal of the existing tax rate, which is 28 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation.

"The cost to the average homeowner is \$47 a year," Dudo said.

If the override fails, it will phase out to two-thirds of that amount in the third year of no override.

GUHSD's operating budget is \$97 to \$98 million per year. It will drop to \$90 million if the override fails, Dudo said.

Next week: Overview of Glendale Elementary School District override.

City offers help on purchase of foreclosures

For individuals interested in purchasing a foreclosed home in a targeted neighborhood in Glendale, the new Glendale Homebuyer Assistance Program may be able to help. The city received federal funds through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), which is money provided to communities hardest hit by residential foreclosures and mortgage delinquencies. Approximately \$1.5 million of the city's NSP funds are being allocated to help finance homebuyer activities through down payment and closing cost assistance.

Under the program, buyers are encouraged to work with Realtors to purchase a foreclosed/abandoned home in one of the three targeted zip codes-- 85301, 85302 and 85303. Qualified residents would include

those with a total household income below 120 percent of annual median income (AMI), which translates into \$79,100 for a family of four.

Also, Glendale's Community Revitalization Division offers down payment assistance through the American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI) program, which offers an interest-free loan up to \$10,000 for eligible home buyers who have a total household income 80 percent below median, as determined by federal income standards: \$52,700 for a household of four.

For more information, call John Camero in the Community Revitalization Division at 623-930-3670 or visit the city's Web site at www.glendaleaz.com.

GREEN: Revamping Web site, From A4

and keeps the water clean," McCarthy said.

For now, the company is working to increase their number of restaurants and complete renovations on their new Glendale processing plant that will have five employees, three drivers and two administration personnel.

"We are in the process of revamping our Web site. It will include the names of every participating restaurant so people who want to support them

know where they are. We are also going to provide each restaurant with a 'Certificate of Membership' to put on their front door or window saying they are in the 'Green Dining Network.' We are hoping to get all of the restaurants in downtown Glendale participating," McCarthy said. "Everything is falling into place, we are very excited."

To learn more about The Green Dining Network, visit their Web site at www.greendiningnet.com.



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