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Vegawatt Adds to Restaurant's Power Menu

As the first winter snowstorms rake the Northeast, many people are giving thanks that the recent economic downturn has kicked off the new year with some of the [lowest energy costs](#) in recent memory. However, if 2008 showed consumers one thing, it's that prices in the oil market remain as volatile as ever. While costs are low now, price fluctuations still present a serious threat to budget conscious homes and businesses alike.

However, some entrepreneurs are finding a silver lining of opportunity beyond this looming danger. With record investments in the clean energy sector, and a new administration determined to support sound, science-based energy policies, many small businesses are turning to on-site cogeneration units—such as the [Vegawatt](#) power system—as a single, renewable solution to their heat, electricity and hot water needs.



While restaurants in many locations have long had the option to [recycle their waste grease products](#), or [sell them to biofuel manufacturers](#), onsite reuse of leftover grease eliminates carbon emissions produced by the transportation process, and presents a better bottom line for the businesses and homes employing it. Vegawatt's data suggests food service operations may be able to glean [\\$2.55 from every gallon](#) of waste oil, roughly ten times what waste oil buyers are currently paying.

In Dedham, MA, just outside of Boston, local restaurateur George Carey sings the praises of the Vegawatt he installed at his restaurant last month. "My largest line-item expense is runaway utility costs," says Cary. "The Vegawatt system enables me to significantly reduce my energy costs, generate clean energy on-site, and very importantly, reduce the heavy energy footprint of my restaurant."

While cogeneration systems—also known as Combined-heat-and-power or CHP—are currently taking aim at the small business or home consumer, a [series of reports](#) over the past year have indicated that larger-scale implementation of such technologies at power plants and large industrial facilities could simply and significantly decrease energy consumption nationwide. These reports cite political will as the only missing component, and with the [incoming administration's commitment to the problem of climate change](#), cogeneration could soon prove a major step in the process.

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