

'Vegawatt' converter turns french fries into fuel

by [Karenke4](#) | January 8, 2009 at 03:54 pm

A new company called **Owl Power** is putting all of that used french fry oil to good use- with the invention of the '**Vegawatt**' converter.

This may be bad news for people like my friend Tim, who has been filling his car for years with the used vegetable oil that that fast food restaurants are happy to be rid of. But for fast food franchises this is great news.

US restaurants use **3 billion gallons of vegetable oil annually**, which up until now turns mainly into waste products that restaurants have to pay to get hauled away. The 'Vegawatt' converts that waste into fuel and hot water that can be recycled back into the running operation of the restaurant.

The unit called the 'Vegawatt' is about the size of a refrigerator and is installed outside the building. Waste oil is deposited, filtered and refined through a patent-pending four-step process, producing refined diesel fuel. The fuel, unlike biodiesel which is made using caustic chemicals, is then combusted in a diesel engine, creating both electricity and a hot water supply that feeds directly into the existing hot water heater. The basic 5 kilowatt unit sells for about \$22,000 and for a typical restaurant (with 3-5 fryers) will pay for itself in less than three years.

Source: mnn.com

Additionally, the fuel produced by the 'Vegawatt' is considered carbon neutral, burning cleaner than traditional fuel.

The Vegawatt fuel is considered "carbon neutral." It produces just a little less CO₂ than natural gas (about 640 grams of CO₂ per kWh) but since the fuel comes from crops which absorb CO₂ during their growing season, it is considered a net zero emitter by the EPA (PDF). It also burns super clean, adhering to the EPA's highest Tier 4 emission standards, which means less air pollutants like NO_x and sulfur dioxide.

Source: mnn.com

The implications of this invention, and the technology that will surely develop out of it are far reaching, hopefully extending to businesses and home owners as well.

<http://www.nowpublic.com/environment/vegawatt-converter-turns-french-fries-fuel>