

DOCKETED

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NEWS RELEASE

SoCalGas Pilot Biogas Project Selected by U.S. Energy Department for Funding

New technology converts waste solids into biocrude oil and methane gas

LOS ANGELES – Feb. 9, 2017 – [Southern California Gas Co.](#) (SoCalGas) today announced a pilot hydrothermal wastewater processing project has been selected by the U.S. Energy Department (DOE) to receive up to \$1.2 million in federal funding. SoCalGas is part of a consortium conducting the pilot, which will be required to share the cost at a minimum of 50 percent in order to receive federal funds. The consortium is being led by the [Water Environment & Reuse Foundation](#).

The project will use hydrothermal processing technology to convert wastewater solids into renewable natural gas as well as liquid fuels. DOE funding is expected to pay for about half of the design and planning of a pilot plant to produce these renewable fuels at a municipal wastewater treatment facility near Oakland, California. SoCalGas will help oversee the project's design and assist in obtaining state and federal regulatory approvals and incentives.

The new technology converts waste solids from a wastewater treatment plant into biocrude and methane gas using water, heat and pressure. The biocrude oil replaces fossil oil, providing green fuels with nearly zero net new carbon emissions. The methane gas can be used in the same ways as fossil natural gas.

“SoCalGas and its partners have demonstrated that this process can very effectively convert wastewater solids into renewable natural gas using existing infrastructure, to help replace fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Jeff Reed, SoCalGas’ director of business strategy and advanced technology. “This new technology could have an enormous impact on energy and waste. Converting the wastewater solids produced by treatment plants in the U.S. with hydrothermal processing could produce about 128 billion cubic feet of natural gas per year and save treatment utilities \$2.2 billion in solids disposal costs. A city of one million people could produce more than 600 million cubic feet of natural gas per year, save more than \$7 million per year in disposal costs, and power nearly 7,000 vehicles per day.”

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, near Oakland, California, will host the pilot system. The consortium includes the Water Environment & Reuse Foundation, which represents many of the 16,000 wastewater systems in the U.S. The consortium also includes Genifuel Corp. with technology from DOE’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Merrick & Co., Tesoro Corp., Metro Vancouver, MicroBio Engineering, Brown and Caldwell, and over a dozen utility partners.

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About Southern California Gas Co: [Southern California Gas Co.](#) (SoCalGas) has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 145 years. It is the nation's largest natural gas distribution utility, providing service to 21.6 million consumers connected through 5.9 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company's service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles throughout central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. SoCalGas is a regulated subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](#) (NYSE: SRE), a Fortune 500 energy services holding company based in San Diego.