

City teams up with small business; utilizes biogas methane as heat source

The City of Rochester is doing its part to be a member of the “green” revolution. Rochester’s Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) is using engine generators fueled with the biogas methane to create electricity and heat for plant use.

Methane biogas is a natural byproduct of anaerobic digestion. The anaerobic digestion process is used to decompose organic material collected as part of the wastewater treatment process. Due to the fact that methane is a potent greenhouse gas, wastewater treatment plants and landfills frequently collect and flare the methane gas. Rochester WRP chose to install engine generators to use the methane gas as a fuel source.

With escalating costs and tighter budgets, it is more important than ever for organizations to look for ways to economize. In Rochester WRP’s case, cost savings come from utilizing methane gas that would otherwise be wasted to create useful electricity and heat. Presently the use of methane gas at Rochester WRP reduces the cost of purchased energy by approximately \$1,800 per day (when compared to the current price of natural gas), making for a substantial cost savings for the City of Rochester and its residents.

Integrated Technology Engineering, Inc. (ITE), the local engineering firm that provided the mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as construction management services for the project, has been involved with the biogas engine generators at WRP for a number of years. ITE has provided engineering and management services for several biogas engine generator projects, as well as studied the feasibility of installing a wind turbine near



Lyle Zimmerman, Water Reclamation Plant Manager (left) and Steve Barna, Integrated Technology Engineering President (right) © Lower 2009

WRP, which along with the engine generators could make WRP nearly energy independent at times.

“Integrated Technology firmly believes that we as a community need to use our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible,” says Kelly O’Marro. “This mission can be accomplished by applying innovative ideas and technologies.”

Since 1986, Integrated Technology has been dedicated to providing the community with solutions to engineering problems which are innovative and cost effective.

How is your organization **going green**? Let us know! Email Brian Olson at the Chamber at bolson@rochestermnchamber.com with your tips or stories.



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