

South San Francisco Company To Turn Food Waste Into Fuel For Collection Fleet

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South San Francisco Scavenger Company (SSFSC) and Blue Line Transfer, the facility that handles SSFSC's recycling and disposal is launching an onsite system to convert food scraps and yard waste into transportation fuel and compost. The new facility uses dry anaerobic digestion technology to generate clean-burning compressed natural gas (CNG), that will power the company's collection fleet. The fully enclosed system is set to process 11,200 tons of material per year, including food scraps and food soiled paper collected from businesses in the company's service area, including South San Francisco, Brisbane, Millbrae, Colma and San Francisco International Airport.



Ribbon cutting ceremony for Scavenger Company, Inc.'s new dry anaerobic digester.

"We're excited about the new digester because it allows us to turn compostable food scraps into fuel for the very trucks that collect those materials. It's a truly closed loop system," said Doug Button, president of South San Francisco Scavenger Company and Blue Line Transfer. "Plus, the process keeps organic waste out of the landfill and cuts greenhouse gas emissions —benefitting the communities we serve, the environment and our company."

Anaerobic digestion is a process that uses microorganisms to break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen, resulting in methane gas. Most anaerobic digesters currently online in California generate electricity from methane. Blue Line Transfer's system, made by Zero Waste Energy, LLC,

is the first dry anaerobic digester in the country to produce CNG transportation fuel. Besides producing up to 500 Diesel Gallon Equivalents (DGE) per day of carbon negative biogenic (renewable) CNG, the process provides digestate, a nutrient-rich substance that will be matured into certified organic compost. Compared to traditional composting, the dry anaerobic digestion process reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other air pollutants.

The launch of the facility is part of South San Francisco Scavenger Company's expanded business collection program for food scraps and food soiled paper. A campaign is currently underway to increase the number of commercial customers participating in the program. The company plans to expand the food scrap collection program to residents as well.

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