

# NEXT Renewable Fuels agrees to 'card-check' with UFCW #555

Oregon's first advanced green diesel production facility will likely be staffed by union labor.

NEXT Renewable Fuels signed a "peace agreement" with United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555. The deal commits the company to recognize a union if a majority of operating staff sign union cards at its planned biofuels manufacturing plant at Port Westward Industrial Park, along the Columbia River outside Clatskanie.

The project is currently in the permitting phase, and the company anticipates opening sometime in 2021.

Construction of the facility will also be done with union labor under a "memorandum of understanding" with the Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council. NEXT Renewable Fu-

els anticipates more than 2 million work-hours for the trades. The company says it will invest more than a billion dollars in the facility, which will turn organic materials—like used cooking oil, white and brown grease, animal tallow and a variety of vegetable oils—into renewable transportation fuels like second-generation advanced green diesel and other products.

Once operational, NEXT will employ some 200 full-time workers.

"Bringing union jobs to Columbia County is good for the workers, good for the community and good for the tax base," said Jeff Anderson, secretary-treasurer for UFCW Local 555. "We're looking forward to a positive partnership with NEXT."

Company president Lou Soumas said the biofuels plant

"cannot be built or operated properly without skilled workers. That's why we previously agreed to work with regional trade unions for the hiring ... to construct our facility. Our agreement with UFCW Local 555 extends our commitment to let local unions meet with our future employees to discuss their mutual desire to work together. We know that Oregon's skilled labor can help us attract the best workers, get the work done properly,

and bring benefits to Oregon's economy and environment."

NEXT will pay an estimated \$12 million in local property taxes and \$5.5 million in port fees annually.

The facility will produce mostly advanced green diesel, plus a small amount of renewable propane and renewable naphtha. It will not be permitted, designed or built to process or produce any fossil fuels. Initially, it will produce more than

37,500 barrels a day of advanced biofuels, growing to more than 50,000 barrels a day at full capacity. The biofuels will be sold throughout the West Coast.

NEXT has contracted with BP to supply renewable feedstock.

According to the company, a full life-cycle analysis shows that NEXT biofuels will create emissions savings equal to removing more than 1 million vehicles from the road.

## ...Unionized C-TRAN wins national award

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The award encompasses C-TRAN's achievements during the past three years in 12 core areas: safety, operations, maintenance, access, customer service, financial management, sustainability, workforce development, attendance and employee costs, minority and women advancement, marketing, and community relations.

"This incredible honor exemplifies the hard work being accomplished by our world-class employees," said C-TRAN

CEO Shawn M. Donaghy. "It is also a constant reminder that public transportation is much larger than a bus stop—it's about community engagement, relationships with local business, providing access to education, workforce opportunities, and having elected officials who work diligently to make Clark County, Washington, a premier place to live. We're humbled to receive such a prestigious honor from APTA, and we take pride in serving our community each and every day."

C-TRAN is the regional public transportation provider for portions of Clark County, Washington. It provides local bus service within its Clark County service area, regional bus service to the nearest MAX light rail station in Portland, and express commuter service to downtown Portland. It also provides connector service within the city limits of Camas, La Center, and Ridgefield, Wash.

C-TRAN will be honored at the APTA annual meeting in October.



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