MegaWatt Ventures Winner Joins USF Tampa Bay Technology Incubator

Trash 2 Cash converts landfill gas into liquid fuels.

By Tracey Swartz
USF Research News

TAMPA, Fla.–Trash 2 Cash-Energy, LLC, (T2CE) winner of the 2012 MegaWatt Ventures competition has joined the Tampa Bay Technology Incubator (TBTI), part of USF CONNECT at the University of South Florida.

Founded in 2012, the USF spin-out company utilizes technology developed at the university for its novel process of converting landfill gas into liquid fuels. By integrating the technology into gas capturing systems at landfills, municipal solid waste (MSW) facilities are able to convert naturally produced gases, including methane and carbon dioxide, into liquid fuel, such as diesel.

The technology not only provides a renewable source of energy, but also greatly reduces the amount of greenhouse emissions of MSW facilities.

In September 2012, Trash 2 Cash-Energy received $100,000 as the first place winner of the 2012 MegaWatt Ventures program, an annual clean energy business plan competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

"By coupling a patent-pending Fischer Tropsch eggshell catalyst to an innovative process design, it is possible to alleviate the problems associated with accumulating municipal solid waste in landfills, and provide a domestic, sustainable, green fuel," said John Kuhn, president of Trash 2 Cash-Energy.

The company will use the award to move forward with commercializing the technology.

Trash 2 Cash-Energy's proprietary system is 63 percent more efficient than current methods of generating electricity from landfill gas and provides an economic advantage to MSW facilities by delivering three times more revenue using the same amount of gas. The company plans to develop a full scale demonstration facility that will be used to market the technology to other MSW plants and landfills.

"T2CE is very excited to become part of the TBTI," said Kuhn. "We are hoping to make great progress in the renewable energy market and are excited to take this next step."

Tracey Swartz can be reached at taswartz@usf.edu.