

Media release from The Hermitage, Aoraki Mount Cook  
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### The Hermitage fuels up for biodiesel trial

An iconic New Zealand hotel is putting its money where its mouth is when it comes to environmental and social responsibility.

The Hermitage Hotel at Aoraki Mount Cook began trialling biodiesel, made from its own recycled cooking oil, in its vehicle fleet today (1 December).

The hotel, one of the first to achieve Qualmark's Enviro-Gold rating last year, is strongly committed to reducing the region's carbon footprint and enhancing Aoraki Mount Cook's clean green credentials, particularly because of its national park and UNESCO World Heritage Area location.

The hotel's rubbish truck is the chosen test vehicle and it will be monitored for fuel consumption and performance for three months. If results are good, the hotel will then gradually roll biodiesel out to the rest of its 16-vehicle fleet. It is also investigating whether biodiesel will run in its diesel-fired hot water and heating boilers, and if so, will see how feasible it is to convert them as well.

Hotel Operations Manager David Kidd is leading the trial in association with Biodiesel New Zealand Ltd, a Solid Energy business. He says the scheme will hopefully sit alongside other hotel initiatives like waste minimisation and energy efficiency and is excited about the possibilities of having a reliable and sustainable fuel source "on tap".

"With three restaurants on site, we're using about 1,000 litres of cooking oil a month so it's fantastic to find a way to recycle a waste product and be ecologically self-sufficient.

"If the trial is successful, I think there could be significant environmental and economic benefits for us. Biodiesel has a low carbon footprint, is clean burning, it's biodegradable if spilled, and because of its high lubricating properties it's easy on engines.

"We just need to ensure there won't be any downstream maintenance or cost issues before committing ourselves fully.

"We're aiming to make our business as sustainable as possible and if we can save money doing it then that's a bonus."

Mr Kidd says Biodiesel New Zealand has been extremely helpful and supportive of the trial.

"We're both really passionate about sustainable practice so we're on the same page. They understand what we



Photo Caption: From Fryer to Fuel

want to achieve and are helping us make it happen,” he says.

Biodiesel New Zealand’s high-quality fuel is produced mainly from recycled canola-type cooking oils at a plant in Christchurch. In the future the business also plans to increase the use of locally grown oilseed rape crops as another source of oil.

The Hermitage trial has started with an 80/20% biodiesel/mineral diesel mix and the biodiesel content will be increased progressively to 100% in relation to fuel consumption and performance.

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