

New 'Green Energy' Plants Planned For LA

The Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, La. (AP) — A Denver-based company called Cool Planet Energy Systems plans three Louisiana projects that will create 72 new jobs.

Cool Planet announced the plans Friday for bio-refineries in Alexandria, Natchitoches and a site still to be determined. The company plans to use harvest wood waste and forest byproducts to make gasoline. Cool Planet also will market a byproduct from its refining process that will be used as an agricultural supplement to boost water retention and carbon released from crops.

The three Louisiana plants are expected to cost \$168 million to construct and will create 72 jobs with an average salary of about \$60,000 a year.

The Town Talk reported (<http://towntalk.com/14sBHy6> [1]) that construction on the 27-acre site at the Port of Alexandria is expected to begin in January, with the plant expected to be open in late 2014. The other two Louisiana plants are expected to be operating in 2016.

Cool Planet also will establish a regional office at the Port of Alexandria, where the city plans to make more than \$500,000 in infrastructure improvements.

The company's technology takes biomass — including wood waste, or parts of trees that have normally been discarded — and converts it to gasoline that can be dropped straight into vehicles without additional refining, jet fuel and biochar.

Biochar is an agricultural product with several applications, including improving soil quality and improving energy generation of wood pellets. With the use of biochar, Cool Planet's production process can be carbon negative, meaning it reduces the amount of fossil fuels in the atmosphere rather than increasing them.

Cool Planet is the fourth biomass project announced in Central Louisiana in the past two years, all using wood products in some way to create fuel that is more environmentally friendly than fossil fuel.

Another startup that's focused on converting biomass to gasoline, Sundrop Fuels Inc., is building its pilot plant just outside Alexandria. German Pellets is planning a wood pellet manufacturing plant in the small LaSalle Parish town of Urania. Most recently, Hinterland LLC announced plans to build a pellet manufacturing plant in Vidalia.

Gov. Bobby Jindal was in Alexandria for Friday's announcement.

"We're continuing to build on our state's rich energy legacy," Jindal said. "This is a

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win-win for the environment, the timber industry and the agriculture industry."

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[1] <http://townta.lk/14sBHy6>