

Shell Station Selling Cellulosic Ethanol

OTTAWA (AP) — A Shell station in Ottawa has become the first in the world to sell gasoline blended with biofuel made from wheat straw, the global oil giant said Wednesday.

Shell said that for the next month, gasoline sold at its station at 1548 Merrivale Road in south Ottawa will contain 10 per cent cellulosic ethanol.

The biofuel is produced locally from non-food raw materials at Iogen Energy Corp.'s demonstration plant, using advanced conversion processes. Privately owned Iogen and Shell are partners in the plant, which produces 40,000 litres of clean-burning fuel a month.

Shell said cellulosic ethanol is far cleaner than conventional fuels and is a key part of the company's strategic investment and development program in sustainable biofuels.

Other major gasoline retailers, from Suncor Energy (TSX:SU)'s Sunoco operations, to Petro-Canada (TSX:PCA) and Imperial Oil (TSX:IMO) have also been selling cleaner fuels blended with ethanol and other additives.

Graeme Sweeney, Shell's executive vice-president for future fuels, said production of clean-fuel gasoline available at the Ottawa station can be expanded further.

"While it will be some time before general customers can buy this product at local service stations, we are working with governments to make large-scale production economic," Sweeney said.

Federal Transport and Infrastructure Minister John Baird, who took part in a news conference at the Merrivale Road station, called it "one big step forward for advanced biofuels globally."

"This is a great day for Canadian technology and proof that Canada's commitment to developing low CO₂ fuels is starting to pay dividends for the environment, farmers, and consumers."

Royal Dutch Shell, which is based in England and Holland, has operations around the world and is listed on the London, Amsterdam, and New York stock exchanges.

In Canada, the company is a major oilsands operator, natural gas and chemicals producer and runs a countrywide network of gasoline stations.

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Privately owned Iogen is a 35 year old company that has been producing cellulosic ethanol at its Ottawa plant since 2004.

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