

American Organic Energy to Operate Anaerobic Digester in Yaphank, New York

Area Development News Desk

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Board of Trustees of the Long Island Power Authority approved the first stand-alone large-scale anaerobic digester, a type of food waste recycling facility, in the New York City metropolitan community of Yaphank, New York.

The project, to be operated by American Organic Energy at Long Island Compost in Yaphank, New York, will process approximately 180,000 tons of local food waste per year.

This waste would have otherwise been transported by gas and diesel-powered trucks to distant landfills, along with 30,000 tons of fats, oils and greases. Working with GE Water and Scott's Miracle-Gro, AOE will collect, separate, pre-process, break down, and transform Long Island's food waste into convertible energy, electricity, fertilizer, and nutrient-rich clean water.

According to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's Office "the project, which will be operational in 2020, will produce four megawatts of clean energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions on Long Island by 85,000 metric tons a year, the equivalent to removing 18,000 cars from the road. The clean energy project directly supports Governor Cuomo's Green New Deal, a clean energy and jobs agenda that puts New York State on a path to a carbon-free economy and supports the State's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030."

"New York State continues to lead the way with clean energy initiatives and innovative solutions that benefit both our neighborhoods and our planet," Governor Cuomo said. "By implementing this groundbreaking technology on Long Island, we can not only produce clean energy and reduce greenhouse gases, but also spare our landfills and keep our communities cleaner and greener for decades to come."

AREA DEVELOPMENT

The facility provides a lower cost waste disposal option for food service businesses such as supermarkets, bakeries, restaurants, commercial food processors, cafeterias, catering halls, and hotels. The Town of Brookhaven will also have the capability to divert 10,000-15,000 tons per year of food waste to the project from the more expensive disposal options currently used.

Greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be reduced by 85,000 tons of CO₂ per year, equivalent to removing 18,000 cars off the road. It will also reduce truck traffic on Long Island roads by 1.4 million miles per year, compared to current landfill disposal practice. In addition, Long Island Compost will convert certain stationary equipment from diesel to electricity, which is expected to reduce diesel fuel consumption by an estimated 200,000 gallons per year. Anaerobic digestion is a biological process that occurs when organic matter is decomposed by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. During the decomposition process, the biogas released can be recovered, treated and used to generate energy in place of traditional fossil fuels.

The project is also supported by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's Cleaner Greener Communities initiative, which provided \$1.35 million and also was chosen for a \$400,000 Empire State Development award by the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council.

Tom Falcone, LIPA's CEO, said, "Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York continues to find innovative ways to produce and deliver clean energy to consumers. Turning food waste into energy here on Long Island diverts waste from Long Island landfills, reduces carbon emissions, and helps LIPA meet New York's aggressive clean energy goals."