



A CLIMATE SOLUTION FOR CITIES THAT DOESN'T STINK!

By Dan Barry | January 20, 2016



Photograph: City of Grand Junction

Mayors and city leaders are constantly searching for new and innovative ways to bring climate solutions to their communities. Grand Junction, Colorado is a standout, particularly for its investment in transforming the city's sewage into usable power. And so far, the investment is paying off.

A newly constructed wastewater treatment plant helps transform millions of gallons of human waste into enough power to fuel the city's entire automotive fleet—including busses, street sweepers, garbage and dump trucks.

The technology has been used for decades through a variety of applications, but Grand Junction is among the first in the nation to specifically use the power to fuel vehicles.

The treatment plant has exceeded the expectations of critics. The plant currently generates the equivalent of 460 gallons of gasoline per day, and by not having to spend this money on fuel, the treatment plant will pay for itself in as few as seven years. There will also be significant cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. The utility estimates 60-80 percent reductions in emissions from the methane that would otherwise be burnt as excess runoff.

Mayors throughout the country can follow the lead being paved by Grand Junction. A recent report by Energy Vision has identified over 8,000 farms, 17,000 wastewater facilities and nearly 2,000 landfills across America, which could be utilized for similar waste-energy production. To facilitate this expansion, mayors and community leaders must work with residents to pursue investments in this new technology.