

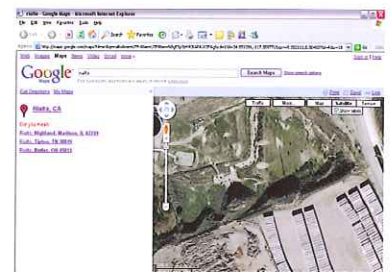
From waste to clean fuel

US-based Rentech Inc has developed a patented process to convert any class of carbon bearing material into clean fuel. The company this year announced plans to design and build a plant in California that should be producing ultra-clean synthetic fuels and electric power from renewable waste biomass feedstocks by 2012, as Rentech's Julie Dawoodjee explains.

Ms. Dawoodjee joined Rentech in 2007, bringing to the table over a decade of investor relations, communications and public reporting experience. She explains that Rentech has been around for nearly thirty years. The founders initially focused on IP around the Fischer-Tropsch process, a chemical reaction in which synthesis gas is converted into liquid hydrocarbons. Their work in this space led to the development of the now patented Rentech Process, which can convert a wide array of carbon bearing materials, including notably biomass and municipal solid waste into ultra clean renewable jet and diesel fuels. Key to the Rentech Process, Ms. Dawoodjee emphasises, is their proprietary iron-based Rentech catalyst, which drives the Rentech Process in a reactor. Rentech is the only US-based company that uses an iron-based catalyst to produce synthetic transportation fuels and chemicals. "Other methods use cobalt-based catalysts, which is both more expensive and harmful to the environment," Ms. Dawoodjee emphasises. "The beauty of iron-based as opposed to cobalt-based also is that the former is much more flexible; you can use any type of carbon feedstock to produce syngas."

She adds that Rentech has deployed the Rentech Process at six facilities, ranging in size and development stage from pilot to semi-commercial. The company also operates a product demonstration unit. Earlier this year, they announced a plan to build a plant in Rialto, California for the production of ultra-clean synthetic fuels and electric power from renewable waste biomass feedstocks. According to a company statement, the Rialto Renewable Energy Center (Rialto Project) is designed to produce approximately 600 barrels per day of pure renewable synthetic fuels and export approximately 35 megawatts of renewable electric power that is expected to qualify under California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) program, which requires utilities to increase the amount of electric power they sell from qualified renewable-energy resources. The plant will be capable of providing enough electricity for approximately 30,000 homes. RenDieselTM, the renewable synthetic diesel to be produced at the facility, meets all applicable fuels standards, is compatible with existing engines and pipelines and burns cleanly, with emissions of particulates and other regulated pollutants significantly lower than the emissions from the combustion

of CARB ultra-low sulphur diesel. Rentech has entered into a licensing agreement with SilvaGas Corporation for biomass gasification technology for the Rialto facility. SilvaGas' biomass gasifier has operated on a commercial scale at a facility in Vermont. "We reviewed dozens of gasification companies but came to the conclusion that only a few have the processes that are commercially viable in producing syngas from biomass resources," Ms. Dawoodjee adds. "We are developing the first of many renewable energy facilities for the production of clean drop-in fuels and power, quickly securing our position in the bio-energy industry."



Aerial view of the Rialto Project site



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