

## India launches the initiative of converting used cooking oil to biodiesel

Oil marketing companies in India have launched the initiative of conversion of used cooking oil, which otherwise would be disposed of in drains, cause spillages/environmental damage and pose health hazards.

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To mark the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2<sup>nd</sup> October as Rashtriya Swachhta Diwas, Secretary, Petroleum and Natural Gas Dr M.M. Kuttu flagged off the publicity vans in Delhi, to generate awareness among the people about the OMCs' initiative of converting used cooking oil to biodiesel.

Wide publicity is being given to the RUCO (repurpose used cooking oil) initiative by the oil marketing companies to make India "clean" by conversion of used cooking oil, which otherwise would be disposed of in drains, cause spillages/environmental damage and pose health hazards. Chairman IOCL Sanjiv Singh was also present on the occasion. Similar initiatives are being launched at various places in the country.

The publicity involves wide social media campaign to spread awareness and educate people about the ill effects of used cooking oil and ways to dispose it off for converting it to biodiesel. The publicity vans will also carry the poster messages across 100 cities to spread the awareness. This awareness initiative of the OMCs would be a continuous process in coming days.

Oil marketing companies (IOCL, BPCL and HPC), under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, have floated Expression of Interest (EOI) across 100 cities of India (details available at <https://bpclproc.in/EPROC/>) for supply of bio-diesel produced from used cooking oil. The EOI provides that the entrepreneurs setting up biodiesel plants get remunerative price and assurance of complete offtake of production by the oil companies.

The consumption of used cooking oil poses adverse health effects. During frying, several properties of cooking oil are altered and total polar compounds are formed on repeated frying. The toxicity of these compounds is associated with several diseases such as hypertension, atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, liver diseases. Therefore, it is essential to monitor the quality of vegetable oils during frying. Also disposal of used oils in drains causes ecological damage and is an environment concern.

In order to safeguard consumer health, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has fixed a limit for Total Polar Compounds at 25 percent beyond which the vegetable oil shall not be used for cooking.

Consumers can give their used cooking oil to authorised aggregators of used cooking oil, who will, in turn, give it to the biodiesel manufacturers for production of biodiesel which will be used for blending with diesel. The details of these aggregators is available at website <https://fssai.gov.in/ruco/collection-point.php>