

Price Rite Fuels

BACKGROUND

Price Rite Fuels, located in Weyburn, Saskatchewan is a privately owned, independent fuel dealer which provides bulk and cardlock diesel and gasoline fuels to agriculture producers, fleets and other users in the southeastern part of the province.

In the spring of 2008 Price Rite decided to pursue the adoption of biodiesel blended fuels into its product mix and offer it to customers.



PROJECT DETAILS

In order to assess the market opportunity for biodiesel blended fuels, the company hosted a Biodiesel Under the Hood Workshop in cooperation with Biofleet Saskatchewan. Current and newly interested clients and customers were invited to learn about biodiesel, its production, use, quality, and storage considerations.

Price Rite then began blending biodiesel prior to the 2008 spring agricultural seeding season with blends of B2 and B5 available to clients and higher blends on special request. Shortly thereafter, the firm made a decision to blend biodiesel into its entire diesel offering.

Logistics

Price Rite purchases its bulk B100 biodiesel in 1000 litre totes and stores them on-site, inside a shed. Diesel fuel arrives at the bulk storage facility in a 60,000 litre tanker truck which unloads directly into outdoor storage tanks. As the diesel fuel is unloaded from the tanker truck into the bulk tank, biodiesel is pumped from the totes directly into the line that is transferring diesel fuel from the tanker to the bulk storage. This system enables a thorough blending of biodiesel with the diesel fuel before entering the bulk storage tank.

Operations

Price-Rite experienced some initial cold weather operational issues after adopting biodiesel due to the fuel being stored outside and in an unheated shed. The firm noted that as the temperature dropped below 0° C some biodiesel in totes gelled. As daytime temperatures rose, the gelled fuel re-liquefied. However, agriculture consumers found that they experienced bulk fuel tank filter blockages with this fuel. Apparently not all of the biodiesel returned to a liquid state, which resulted in the filters plugging as they trapped these solid particles.

Price Rite Fuels

Price Rite solved this problem by implementing two measures. It now stores the biodiesel totes in a heated and insulated storage shed and installed a filtering system which ensures that any impurities are trapped before the fuel is blended with diesel. Since making these changes neither Price Rite nor its customers have experienced any further problems with biodiesel.

Consumer Reaction

Price-Rite has approximately 650 customers purchasing biodiesel blended fuel. Although the bulk of customers use a B2 blend, a number prefer B5 or higher blends. At times, customers have purchased blends as high as 50% for their vehicles.

A challenge for agriculture producers when using high biodiesel blends is that the solvent type characteristics of biodiesel will begin to remove diesel residue which coats the inside of fuel storage tanks. The higher the biodiesel blend used the faster this residue will be cleaned out resulting in more frequent filter changes. Older fuel storage tanks should be properly cleaned out before using high biodiesel blends.

Local agricultural producers have responded positively to biodiesel. A case in point is that of local producer Quenten Domes, a progressive farmer with a land base of 4200 acres. Mr. Domes uses approximately 35,000 litres of diesel fuel each year in his operation and began purchasing B5 from Price-Rite when the fuel became available in 2008. He reports that equipment seemed to start better and certain equipment appeared to operate longer demonstrating an improvement in fuel economy. The only problem experienced was a bulk fuel tank filter failure which has been attributed to the earlier fuel blending and storage methods used by Price Rite which resulted in filter plugging in Domes' bulk tank. Since Price Rite changed its methods Domes has experienced no further filter plugging issues.

"I am quite pleased with the performance of my equipment after switching to biodiesel blended fuel. Other than a minor filter failure on my bulk tank, it has been a smooth transition. I will definitely continue using biodiesel and would be interested in using higher percentage blends, provided they are price competitive" - Quinton Domes

Emission Reduction

At its current usage rate, Price Rite will market about 25,000 litres of biodiesel during 2008. This equates to a GHG reduction of approximately 71 tonnes.

CONTACT INFO

Maurice Clark, Manager
Price Rite Fuels
Weyburn, SK. S4H 0A2
Telephone: (306) 842-4446

