Turning waste into energy

El Paso Water is making strides in our commitment to environmental stewardship with our latest initiative to transform waste into energy to power one of our oldest plants, the Haskell R. Street Wastewater Treatment Plant.

It’s a move we are celebrating this Earth month, because it not only follows our reputation of innovation, but also cuts costs for the utility and our ratepayers.

Many of our customers may be familiar with the term FOG, which stands for fats, oils, and greases. It is a cumulation of waste that is often disposed of in drains, something we highly discourage because it could lead to clogged pipes. Large amounts of FOG collected every day by local businesses and restaurants will soon benefit the Haskell Wastewater Plant, which serves Central El Paso.

How it works

About 5,500 gallons of FOG will be collected from local food service establishments and sent by truck to the Haskell plant daily by Liquid Environmental Solutions. Before the FOG enters the Haskell facility, it will go through a robust and multi-step treatment process.

The FOG will be mixed in with biosolids to boost biogas production like methane gas. A similar project on a smaller scale has already proven to be successful at the Haskell Plant. FOG is converted into methane gas to fuel boilers that are needed to keep solid waste at a required temperature. The methane gas produced gives us an additional resource instead of relying on natural gas 24 hours a day to run the boilers.

Sustainability and efficiency

The energy produced in this new FOG project will supply an estimated 20% of the power needed to run the Haskell plant. Using this method will help reduce energy costs significantly, a savings that is passed down to our customers.

Haskell can treat up to 27.7 million gallons of wastewater per day into reclaimed water that is used for landscape irrigation and to irrigate local farms.

Design of the project has been completed and we are moving forward with a construction bid to complete the project in 2022.

EPWater is taking on this initiative to not only cut costs, but to responsibly manage waste and keep it out of landfills. It’s a responsibility we don’t take lightly, as we continue working to improve the resiliency and sustainability of EPWater and the services we provide our community.