

Ethanol plant on schedule

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ON TARGET Ryan Duffy of Blackstone Energy Services Inc., one of the partners in the Collingwood ethanol plant said the plant will be in operation by June 1.

THE COLLINGWOOD Ethanol plant will be up and running on June 1. This is what Ryan Duffy of Blackstone Energy Services Inc., one of the partners in the plant, told more than 40 people at the Collingwood Chamber of Commerce Power Lunch last week.

"We are on time and on budget," he said of the \$50 million project. "We are on target to start producing ethanol on June 1."

Duffy said the plant, which is operating out of the former Nacan facility, is likely to produce more than 50 million litres of ethanol a year.

"We are retro-fitting a starch plant and putting a distillery on the back end," he said.

He said the facility will be taking corn and turning it into 200 proof alcohol, which mixed with a hint of gasoline, makes ethanol. He says the plant has the ability to use other items such as corn, wheat, sugar cane and grass to make ethanol.

Duffy says ethanol has been in the news a lot of over the past 18 months. He said the government is requiring that all gas have at least a five per cent ethanol content by 2007 and at least 10 per cent by 2010. He says the plant received \$7.3 million in funding from the federal government.

According to Duffy, government reports have said that if 35 per cent of the gas in Canada had at least 10 per cent ethanol content, it would eliminate 1.7 mega tons in greenhouse emissions, or the equivalent of 400,000 cars.

Duffy says with the expected increase in ethanol content, the company has room to grow. He said the plant will be supplying a refinery with ethanol, however the 54 million litres from the Collingwood plant, will only cover a third of the refinery's needs.

They are going to start off with 40 employees but are hoping to grow.

"We'd like to expand the plant but it's not in the plans right now," Duffy said. "We have a large refinery that is accepting all of the ethanol we produce. Our door is still open."

Duffy was asked about the environmental impact the plant will have.

He said the company is below the required levels of emissions and plans on staying there.

"Nacan did a good job of keeping the plant clean," he said.