

Eliminating Dust

Yakayo Biofuels Finds Safer Way with Biodiesel Catalysts

Yakayo Biofuels' biodiesel plant in Ukiah, CA, is utilizing a new system to process its catalyst.

The system eliminates the need for a catalyst tank and the subsequent dust that is generated, said Kumar Plocher, president (707-472-0900).

Plocher said the plant is utilizing potassium hydroxide (KOH) as its catalyst, as opposed to sodium hydroxide which most biodiesel plants utilize.

Yakayo Biofuels' 250,000 gallon per year plant utilizes restaurant fire grease as its feedstock in its transesterification



process. According to Plocher, KOH is the best catalyst for this type of feedstock.

"The most dangerous part of any biodiesel operation is the methanol processing, specifically when you are mixing the catalyst,"

he said.

"We've found that our biggest concern with KOH is the dust it was generating when mixing it," Plocher said.

"When mixing the KOH into methanol, our employees are wearing full body suits, and wearing respirators underneath

the hoods," he continued.

KOH comes in bags in a flake form. When stacked on each other on pallets, the KOH in the bottom bags get pulverized which means power and potential dust, he said.

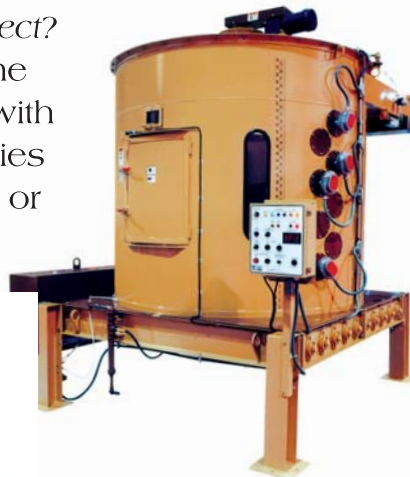
To eliminate this problem and potential for harm to the employees, Yakayo Biofuels will be switching to a new system developed by Vortex Ventures, Houston, TX.

It will continuously feed the KOH into the methanol, eliminating the need for a 350-gallon methane oxide mixer tank, and eliminating the dust problem, Plocher said.

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