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Construction has begun for county's "Landfill Gas to Energy" project

Construction is now underway for a \$3.5 million project in La Crosse County. The "Landfill Gas to Energy" project helped the county earn Green Tier status from the Wisconsin DNR.

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LA CROSSE, WI (WEAU)--Following about two years of planning, La Crosse County and Gundersen Lutheran finally broke ground today to mark the start of the "Landfill Gas to Energy" project.

"We're going to take landfill gas out of our landfill," said La Crosse County Solid Waste Department Director Hank Koch. "We're going to ship it through a pipeline after we've cleaned it up and it's going to be burned for energy at Gundersen Lutheran."

Koch says the county is pitching in about \$1.5 million for the project and Gundersen Lutheran will pay the rest.

"That should pay back quite nicely, actually because it's off-setting a big portion of our electricity bill as well as our natural gas bill and we're providing a revenue stream for the county, the landfill that's significant," said Gundersen's Executive Director of Efficiency Improvement Jeff Rich.

The county's work with the Gas to Energy project, along with its other sustainable work, helped it earn Green Tier status from the Wisconsin DNR. DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp says the county's solid waste department is the first publically-owned solid waste system in the state to achieve that status.

"They just have to demonstrate that they're doing different environmental sustainable programs, that they're reusing much of their waste materials," Stepp said. "We've really set the bar kind of high of what it takes to be considered a Green Tier 1 participant."

Koch says, "This Green Tier status gives assurance to all the citizens and users of the

landfill that their waste is being properly disposed of at the highest possible level.”

Koch says the county will continue to look for sustainable projects like the Landfill Gas to Energy to make the area even more environmentally friendly.

Koch says construction for the Gas to Energy project will go throughout the summer. He says by October or November, Gundersen Lutheran will be able to start converting the gas to energy.

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