

## [Layoffs at Imperium Renewables in Grays Harbor](#)

### Local News

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SEATTLE--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Imperium Renewables today announced a reduction of 24 people from its workforce at Imperium Grays Harbor biodiesel production facility. The company took this action in order to reduce costs and preserve capital in the face of dramatically reduced global demand for biodiesel, high feedstock prices and extreme volatility in the petroleum fuel markets. "This is an extremely painful step to take, given our employees' dedication to the company and to the greater cause of reducing our dependency on fossil fuels," said John Plaza, founder and CEO of Imperium Renewables. "Today's announcement is an unfortunate, but necessary, step given the current economic environment as well as the lagging demand for our product. These are difficult choices that will allow Imperium to survive and grow when the market turns around for the biofuels industry. We understand this is a difficult blow to the Grays Harbor community. We remain committed to Grays Harbor and are doing everything we can to reverse the course our industry has taken." The biodiesel industry has been hit hard over the last 18 months, largely due to economic turmoil, volatile energy prices, soaring feedstock costs and the continuing credit crisis. In particular, the recession has led to a drastic reduction in demand for fuels of all types, but especially for biofuels.

Until recently, the soft U.S. biofuels market had been offset by demand in the European market, where mandated biodiesel markets had made biodiesel competitive. This advantage ended on March 3 of this year when the European Union enacted tariffs on imported US produced biodiesel. "This confluence of market-driven and geopolitical events has made it very difficult to operate our business as we had planned. The failure in implementation of US policy initiatives such as the Renewable Fuel Standard which was enacted by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (H.R. 6) has further deteriorated the market." said Plaza. "Despite these challenges, we remain hopeful that there will be a strong future for biodiesel given the Obama administration's leadership on renewable energy," he continued. "He has called for doubling renewable energy consumption in the next three years, enforcing the existing renewable fuel mandates, and enacting future biofuel-friendly policies such as low-carbon fuel standards and a carbon emission cap and trade system. Such forward thinking policies will be required to create a stable market for current and next generation biofuels."

**About Imperium Renewables** Imperium Renewables is a producer of biodiesel. Its flagship facility in Grays Harbor has an operating capacity of 100 million gallons per year, and is the largest BQ-9000 certified facility in the United States. Biodiesel is a clean-burning alternative fuel made from oils derived from farm crops, and can be used in any conventional diesel engine. It can be used in pure form (100 percent biodiesel) or in a "blended" form, in which it replaces a percentage of petroleum diesel.