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How 'green' is your pizza?

Doreen's outfits trucks to run on natural gas

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Maybe you didn't think it was possible, but pizza just got better, or at least greener.

Doreen's Gourmet Pizza on Thursday officially launched its new fleet of delivery vehicles that run on compressed natural gas.

"It makes sense economically for business, and environmentally it makes sense since there are less greenhouse emissions," Doreen's owner Bob Wisz said.

The company's eight delivery trucks are bifuel vehicles, running on gasoline as a backup. If a truck runs out of natural gas, the driver can switch to gasoline. Wisz said this is a necessity because there aren't many natural gas fueling stations.

Because of the lack of natural gas stations on the delivery routes, Wisz installed one at the company's Calumet City pizza plant. Trucks can fuel up before delivering pizzas to Walt's Food Centers, Super Kmart stores and other distribution sites in the Southland.

The conversion cost about \$40,000, Wisz said. But, as with many green conversions, he stands to save money in the long run.

Doreen's had been shelling out more than \$6,000 a month on gasoline. With its own fueling station, it pays about \$1 per gallon for natural gas.

Also, the average natural gas engine lasts longer.

Wally Losiniecki, a commercial accounts salesman for Doreen's, said he thinks the conversion - touted in big "Green Machine" lettering on the side of the vehicles - will attract more customers.

Doreen's will carry pizza in its green machines to the Taste of Chicago this year from its original restaurant in Chicago's Hegewisch community.

DOREEN'S DISTRIBUTORS

- Country Squire (Chicago Heights)
- Pete's Fresh Market (Evergreen Park)
- Super Kmart stores in the Southland
- Tony's Finer Foods in Bridgeview
- Ultra Foods in Chicago Heights
- Walt's Food Centers in the Southland