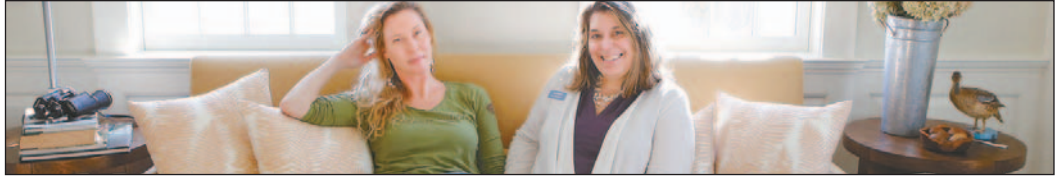
PIECE OF PARADISE: Renovations are complete at sanctuary farmhouse. **A3**



WINES OF PORTUGAL offer a high-quality option at affordable prices. **C10**

The Newport Daily News

$1.00
NewportDailyNews.com

NEWPORT ◆ MIDDLETOWN ◆ PORTSMOUTH ◆ JAMESTOWN ◆ TIVERTON

Saturday and Sunday
January 18-19, 2014

WEEKEND EDITION

Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

Newport Biodiesel President Blake Banky says he's concerned that the EPA's proposal to cut renewable fuel requirements could put the future of the company in danger.

Newport Biodiesel fears for its future

EPA's proposed changes for renewable fuels could cut into thriving company's profits

By Sean Flynn
Staff writer

NEWPORT — Newport Biodiesel LLC, a company that has expanded rapidly in the past six years by converting used vegetable oil from restaurants into environmentally friendly biodiesel fuel, now sees its future threatened by a federal agency the company thought was on its side.

"We are a for-profit company," said Blake Banky, the company's president. "But many of us who come through the door every day to work want to make a clean-burning fuel for the environment. That should be the goal of the Environmental Protection Agency as well. That the EPA has now become a threat to us is ironic."

The EPA is proposing to cut the requirement for the amount of biodiesel to be used in fuels to more than 50 percent below what was produced nationally in 2013 and to continue that level into 2015, said Robert Morton, the company's board chairman. Newport Biodiesel was relying on projections that the EPA would be requiring a national production of 2 billion gallons of renewable fuel in 2014. Instead, the EPA is considering cutting the requirement to 1.28 billion gallons a year.

"This is hard to believe," Morton said. "Last year, we had such a great year. Now, all our plans to expand could be stopped. Our future is in jeopardy."

'We are a for-profit company. But many of us who come through the door every day to work want to make a clean-burning fuel for the environment. That should be the goal of the Environmental Protection Agency as well.'

BLAKE BANKY
president of Newport Biodiesel

The federal agency oversees the Renewable Fuel Standard, a program that requires fuel sold in the U.S. to contain a minimum volume of renewable fuels. The program originated with the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and was expanded and extended by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

Newport Biodiesel sold its first gallon of biodiesel fuel processed from cooking oil in January 2008, and the company has flourished since then, in large part because of the federal program.

Companies that refine, import or blend petroleum fuels are required to demonstrate they have met their biofuel quota under the law by submitting a certain amount of "Renewable Identification Numbers" to the EPA. These RINs represent the amount of biofuel that has been blended into the fossil fuels that dominate the market.

If the oil companies do not produce renewable fuel themselves, they are required to purchase RINS from companies like Newport Biodiesel.

"These RINs help us to keep our price lower so that biodiesel costs no more than petroleum diesel," Morton explained.

"RINs make up a significant part of our revenue stream," Banky said.

If the EPA cuts the amount of renewable fuel that is required nationally, "this will certainly lower the price of RINs and will mean we will be unable to compete with the petroleum diesel price," Morton said.

The EPA is gathering comments on its proposal until Jan. 28. Then it will make a final decision based on what it has heard from the public and from the renewable fuel and oil industries.

"Biodiesel is 90 percent cleaner than petroleum distillates," Banky noted. That seemed to guarantee a future of expanding demand for the product, he said.

BIODIESEL A6

ALSO

◆ Newport Biodiesel's chairman says pressure from Big Oil weighs heavily on EPA decision. **Guest View, A7**

Navy base takes active approach to assault prevention

By Joe Baker
Staff writer

NEWPORT — Some victims of sexual assault choose not to report the crime because of fears the judicial process will victimize them again.

In the military, that reluctance may be compounded by the emphasis placed on being part of a team. Victims know filing a criminal complaint could have profound impacts on their career.

"There are a few extra factors," said Allison Agnello, Naval Station Newport's sexual assault response coordinator. "Is the command going to take care of this? Is it going to affect my career?"

A recent Department of Defense report estimated there were more than 26,000 cases of sexual assault in the military in fiscal 2012, but only 3,374 were reported. Naval Station Newport, like military bases all over the country, considers sexual assault a serious offense and has a comprehensive strategy in place designed not only to help victims, but to change prevailing attitudes to reduce the numbers of victims.

"It is challenging," said Capt. Douglas W. Mikatarian, commanding officer of Naval Station Newport. "There's a lot at stake."

As a training base, Naval Station Newport often is the first duty station for both enlisted and officers. The command has to start the process of converting civilians into sailors.

Training about how to prevent sexual assault and the importance of reporting it has taken on a bigger part of that conversion, Mikatarian said.

Agnello also serves as the sexual assault response coordinator for the naval reserve center in Quincy, Mass., and the USS Constitution in Boston. She said she holds monthly meetings to discuss the general issue of sexual assault and specific cases. Sitting in at the meeting of the Sexual Assault Case Management Group are representatives from the Navy Justice Advocate General's office, the Naval Criminal Investigative Services, and medical, security and mental health departments.

In specific cases, a victim's advocate from the base of the person reporting a sexual assault and the commanding officer of both the accuser and the accused also attend.

Agnello's office is notified immediately when a sexual assault is reported at Naval Station Newport. She begins the process of coordinating individual care and resources for the victim.

The base has a pool of 50 victim advocates who are trained in all aspects of easing the painful process of reporting a sexual assault. The base also provides regular training to military and civilian employees on prevention, reporting and the importance of stepping in if one witnesses an apparent or potential assault.

"Bystander intervention is a really big push right now," Agnello said.

"You are the one that can make a difference," Mikatarian said. "It's important to know that your command supports you and expects you to intervene."

Advocates regularly set up informational booths around the base — Wednesday there

ASSAULT A6

Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

Students walk past a sexual assault information booth Wednesday at Naval Station Newport's Ney Hall Galley.

'There are a few extra factors. Is the command going to take care of this? Is it going to affect my career?'

ALLISON AGNELLO
Naval Station Newport's sexual assault response coordinator

Meth lab uncovered in city

Daily News staff

A Pawtucket man who allegedly operated a methamphetamine lab at the Pineapple Inn, 372 Coddington Highway, Newport, is in federal custody after federal agents arrested him at the motel Thursday.

Sean Costigan, 51, was arraigned Friday in U.S. District Court in Providence on four charges of meth trafficking. U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Patricia A. Sullivan ordered him held without bail.

Costigan called an undercover police officer Wednesday and said he had about six grams of meth for sale, according to an affidavit filed in federal court by David Verity, a detective with the Warwick Police Department and a member of a federal Drug Enforcement Administration task force. Costigan told the undercover officer to go to the motel's front desk on Thursday and ask for Room 132, the affidavit says.

At the request of investigators, a motel employee knocked on the door, which Costigan answered. He was taken into custody, Verity wrote, and no one else was found inside the room.

DEA agents and Warwick detectives obtained a search warrant for Room 132 and found canisters of Coleman fuel, batteries stripped of their casings to remove the lithium, ice packs cut open to expose the ammonium nitrate inside, tubes, salt, fertilizer and bottles, Verity wrote. All those items are associated with a meth manufacturing operation, he wrote in his affidavit.

"In addition, investigators seized what they believe to be pseudoephedrine, a precursor chemical to the manufacture of methamphetamine,

METH A6

Fatal overdoses double in first 2 weeks of year

By Erika Niedowski
Associated Press

PROVIDENCE — There have been 22 accidental fatal drug overdoses across Rhode Island in the first two weeks of the year, twice the normal rate, health officials said Friday.

Many of the deaths were from drugs sold illegally on the street, according to Health Department Director Michael Fine. He said no single reason has been identified to explain the increase from Jan. 1 to Jan. 13.

"Drug addiction is a chronic serious disease with a significant mortality," he said. "Too many people are doing drugs."

Those who died included men and women between the ages of 20 and 62. The drugs involved included cocaine, heroin, benzodiazepines, methamphetamine, oxycodone and the muscle relaxant carisoprodol, Fine said. In 13 cases, initial screening tests found the prescription painkiller fentanyl or a drug like it.

Acetyl fentanyl, a synthetic opiate believed responsible for more than a dozen deaths in Rhode Island last year, has not been found so far, officials said. Toxicology tests are not yet complete.

The deaths took place in 13 cities and towns and were all individual events.

Fine and Craig Stenning, director of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare,

OVERDOSE A6

COMING *attractions*
Some things you won't want to miss

MONDAY

>>> **RAPTORS ENRAPTURING AUDIENCES** at Sachuest Point National Wildlife refuge.

TWELVE-HOUR ARTISTIC MARATHON takes over Jamestown Arts Center.

WEATHER

Today, rain likely. High 43.
Tonight, cloudy. Low 28.

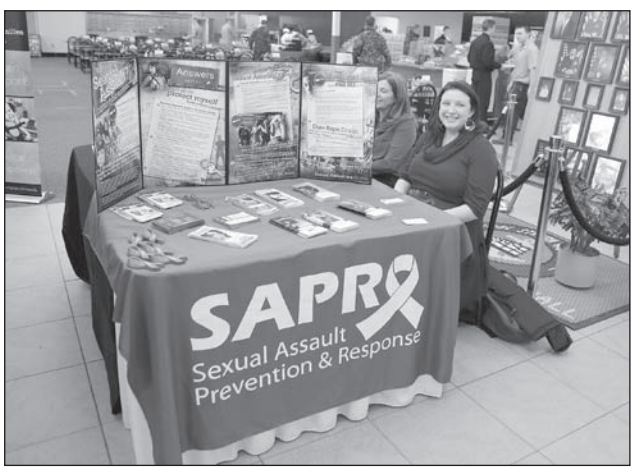
Sunday, snow showers. High 37.
Sunday night, chance of snow. Low 29.

Details, A6

Advice	C7
Business	C8
Calendar	A5
Classifieds	B8
Community	C1
Local & State	A3
Obituaries	A4
Opinion	A7
Religion	C6
Sports	B1
Television	B5-B6

8 14119 00002 4

For home delivery, call 849-3300, Ext. 299



Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

Audrey Scott, a professional victim advocate for the U.S. Navy, displays information about sexual assault on Wednesday at Naval Station Newport.

Assault

Continued from A1

was one in the base galley — to provide information about the crime, the importance of reporting incidents and the resources available for victims of sexual assault. Different training seminars are provided for different levels of leadership, Agnello said, so that division and department heads also are instructed how best to interact with their subordinates on the subject.

In October, as part of the Navy-wide Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program, Naval Station Newport instituted nightly "roving patrols," Command Master Chief Shannon Howe said. Two senior petty officers patrol the base, stopping at all barracks and places where sailors might gather at night to provide a visible presence and another point where senior leaders can interact with sailors, she said.

Howe has met with representatives from area police departments and Salve Regina University to share ideas and develop working relationships, she said. Even if a sexual assault involving a sailor happens off base, Naval Station Newport will have to deal with the case when that sailor returns to the base, Mikatarian said.

In addition to preventing sexual assaults, it is important to instill in sailors the courage to come forward and report them, he said.

"The No. 1 focus is prevention," Mikatarian said. "But we've also got many programs and resources in place to take care of the victim. This is a big deal. Sexual assault is contrary to what we are as an organization."

Baker@NewportRI.com

Pa. judge strikes down state's voter ID law

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

HARRISBURG, Pa. — A Pennsylvania judge has found the state's voter ID law unconstitutional.

According to the ruling from Commonwealth Court Judge Bernard McGinley, the requirement to present an acceptable form of identification when voting in person "unreasonably burdens the right to vote."

The requirement was challenged in court after Republican legislators passed it and Gov. Tom Corbett signed it into law by in March 2012.

A group of state Senate Democrats hailed the ruling as a victory for fair elections and said they hoped the Corbett administration would not fight the decision through appeals.

"They've gone beyond where they already should have gone on this in terms of using resources," said Senate Minority Leader Jay Costa, D-Forest Hills. "They shouldn't spend another penny on this."

The costs to defend the law in court as well as the state's expenditures on posters and ads to explain the law — even when it wasn't in effect — have been a frequent complaint of Democrats.

Other opponents of the law also were pleased.

Witold Walczak, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania and one of the lead attorneys for the challengers, wrote in an email: "Once the Commonwealth admitted they couldn't identify any of the fraud supposedly prevented by the voter ID law, the act was plainly revealed to be nothing more than a voter suppression tool."

Republicans saw it differently.

In a post on Twitter, Senate President Pro Tem Joe Scarnati, R-Jefferson, said the judge had disregarded U.S. Supreme Court precedent "in throwing out common sense voter ID law supported by a vast majority of Pennsylvanians."

Biodiesel

Continued from A1

"There has been so much pressure against the regulation from the oil companies," Morton said. "They are fighting the Renewable Fuel Standard tooth and nail. When they talk about the requirement, they never mention carbon emissions from petroleum products and global warming."

Newport Biodiesel's rate of production is now about 1.5 million gallons a year, Banky said. The company's goal this year was to boost the production rate to 2 million gallons.

It increased production to 1.3 million gallons of biodiesel in 2013, up from 900,000 gallons in 2012.

"We have 2,000 restaurant partners that we collect waste vegetable oil from," Banky said.

The restaurants are located throughout Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, southern New Hampshire and parts of New York, he said. A fleet of eight company trucks collects the vegetable oil.

"The vegetable oil is a commodity," he said. "There is steep competition for it. Regionally, we are one of the bigger companies, but we have to price competitively to compete."

There are two halves to the business, Banky said, the collection of the oil and turning the product into biodiesel. It is the second half of the business that is at risk; but if the demand for biodiesel drops, so does the value of the used vegetable oil.

"We sell into the supply chain at the wholesale level," Banky said. "Our customers fill up tractor trailers of biodiesel."

The customers mix it with heating oil or with petrol diesel, or have some other use for it because of the renewable fuels requirement.

Expecting increasing demand for its product, Newport Biodiesel in the past 90 days extended its lease for the property at 312 Connell Highway in Newport for 10 more years.

"We need stability in the industry if we are to survive," Morton said.

The company has made the Rhode Island congressional delegation — Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse and Jack Reed, and Reps. David Cicilline and James Langevin, all Democrats — aware of the major repercussions the EPA proposal could have. Whitehouse is a member of the Senate's Environment and Public Works Committee, which is influential in connection with EPA regulations.

"The future of Newport Biodiesel has never been more bleak," Morton wrote in a letter to the congressional delegation. He said the proposed rule is not only "devastating" to his company, but "the entire biodiesel industry."

"Considering the time required (by EPA) to implement the comment period, review the comments received, and then execute a decision, even if a positive result were attained, under this scenario our business will be under extreme duress for the next several months," Morton wrote.

"While some renewable fuels like ethanol have proven to be counterproductive from an environmental standpoint, the biofuels produced by Newport Biodiesel and others are much cleaner and can be an important component of American energy policy going forward," Seth Larson, a spokesman for Whitehouse, said Friday.

"Senator Whitehouse was disappointed to see the EPA's proposed biodiesel standard set lower than what the industry is capable of producing, and is hopeful that the Agency will reconsider and set higher levels in the final rule."

A large component of the renewable fuels has been ethanol, which has become controversial because of the large amounts of corn that have been used to distill it.

"There is no reason to lump us together," Banky said. "Ethanol and biodiesel are two different fuels with two different markets. Biodiesel is very clean when carbon emissions are considered."

There have been other recent developments that have hurt the company, Morton said.

Newport Biodiesel had been receiving a $1 per gallon tax credit for every gallon of biodiesel blended with petroleum diesel. However, that provision expired at the end of 2013 and has not been reinstated for 2014.

Also, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has a program that provided funding for expanding biodiesel production. Since a re-authorization of the federal Farm Bill has not been passed, there no longer is any funding for the program in 2014.

"The government is basically pulling the rug out from underneath our company," Morton said. "All three of the major government supports for renewable fuels such as biodiesel have been eliminated or drastically reduced for 2014. These cuts will make it extremely difficult for us to compete on a cost basis with petroleum diesel, which continues to receive all of the subsidies it normally gets."

Flynn@NewportRI.com

'Ethanol and biodiesel are two different fuels with two different markets. Biodiesel is very clean when carbon emissions are considered.'

Blake Banky, Newport Biodiesel president, pictured below

Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

U.S. employers advertise most jobs since '08

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. employers advertised more jobs in November and more Americans quit, positive signs for millions who are unemployed and looking for work.

The Labor Department said Friday that job openings rose 1.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted 4 million, the most in 5½ years. And the number of people quitting increased 1.9 percent to a seasonally adjusted 2.4 million, a five-year high.

Job openings haven't topped 4 million since March 2008, just a few months after the Great Recession began. Openings at that level are generally consistent with a healthy job market.

And more workers quitting can also be a positive signal, because people usually quit when they either have a new job — typically for more pay — or are confident they can find one.

The data suggest the competition for jobs is getting a little bit easier. There were 2.7 unemployed workers for each available job in November, down from 6.7 just after the recession ended in July 2009. In a healthy economy the ratio is roughly 2 to 1.

More job openings and quits suggest greater opportunities for the unemployed. But those positive trends haven't recently translated into additional hiring. Overall hiring ticked up just 0.2 percent in November to nearly 4.5 million.

The figures also follow a disappointing report on December job growth. The government last week said employers added just 74,000 jobs in December. That's the fewest in three years and below an average gain of 214,000 in the previous three months.

The unemployment rate fell to 6.7 percent, the lowest in more than five years. But the rate dropped mostly because more Americans gave up looking for work. The government counts people as unemployed only if they are actively hunting for jobs.

Poachers kill over 1,000 white rhinos

Los Angeles Times

The world's largest surviving population of white rhinos suffered its heaviest toll on record last year when poachers killed more than 1,000 of the threatened animals to feed an international market for trinkets and potions made from their horns.

The South African Department of Environmental Affairs reported Friday that it had counted 1,004 rhinos killed by poachers in 2013, mostly in Kruger National Park, along the porous border with Mozambique.

It was the worst year for rhinoceros poaching since the government began tracking the illegal hunting in the early 1900s, National Geographic reported.

South Africa is home to more than 20,000 white rhinos, about 80 percent of the world's population of the iconic beasts that numbered 500,000 a century ago, conservation organizations report.

Soaring demand for rhino horn from Asian countries, particularly China and Vietnam, is driving up prices for the slain animals' signature feature, nurturing an illegal poaching network operating out of Mozambique, explained Tom Milliken, rhinoceros expert with the global wildlife trade monitoring organization TRAFFIC.

"South Africa and Mozambique must decisively up their game if they hope to stop this blatant robbery of southern Africa's natural heritage," Milliken said, calling on authorities to make 2014 "the turning point where the world, collectively, says 'enough is enough' and brings these criminal networks down."

Meth

Continued from A1

which is still pending confirmatory testing," Verity wrote. "A quantity of suspected methamphetamine was also seized at the motel room and is also pending confirmatory testing.

"Simply put, according to members of the (DEA) Clandestine Laboratory Tactical Team, it appears the motel room contained every stage of the methamphetamine manufacturing process."

Warwick police and DEA agents began an investigation into Costigan's alleged meth trafficking in May 2013, according to a criminal complaint filed by U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha's office.

"It is alleged that on at least four occasions, between October and December 2013, an undercover law enforcement officer purchased between 1.4 grams and 6.8 grams of meth from Costigan for between $100 and $400 dollars," according to a prepared statement from Neronha's office.

The DEA Drug Task Force is comprised of law enforcement agents and officers from DEA, Rhode Island State Police, and the Newport, Cranston, East Providence, Pawtucket, South Kingstown, Warwick and Woonsocket police departments.

Costigan's arrest and detention were announced Friday in Neronha, Warwick Police Chief Col. Stephen M. McCartney, and John J. Arvanitis, special agent in charge of the DEA New England field division.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Pamela E. Chin is prosecuting the case.

Overdose

Continued from A1

Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, made a plea for those with substance abuse problems to get treatment, and for family members and loved ones to encourage them to.

Stenning said relapse is common, but people can and do recover from addiction.

"We don't consider relapse a failure. There is no such thing as failure," Stenning said at a news conference at health department headquarters. "Recovery is about hope. Recovery is about making a decision to live rather than die."

Lt. Robert Wall of Rhode Island State Police urged people to call authorities if they suspect someone has overdosed. He cited a law enacted in Rhode Island in 2012, the Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Act, designed to protect from prosecution those who seek emergency medical help in such cases.

Many are often afraid to call authorities for fear they will be charged themselves with minor drug violations.

"Call the police," Wall said. "You may save a life."

CORRECTIONS

The Newport Daily News seeks to be fair and accurate in reporting the news. If you believe we have published an error, please let us know. Call the city editor at 849-3300, Ext. 254, send an email to CityDesk@NewportRI.com or write us at 101 Malbone Road, Newport, RI 02840.

WEATHER

COASTAL RHODE ISLAND

Today, rain likely, mainly before noon. High near 43. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low around 28.

Sunday, a chance of snow showers, mainly between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. High near 37. Snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible. Sunday night, a chance of snow showers before 7 p.m. Low around 29.

EXTENDED

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, mostly sunny. High near 37. Monday night, mostly cloudy. Low around 20.

Tuesday, partly sunny. High near 25. Tuesday night, mostly cloudy. Low around 11.

MARINE

Today, southeast wind 5-10 knots, becoming southwest with gusts up to 20 knots in the afternoon. Waves 2-3 feet. Visibility 1-3 miles. Tonight, west wind 10-15 knots with gusts up to 25 knots. Waves 2-3 feet.

Sunday, southwest wind 10-15 knots with gusts up to 25 knots. Waves 2-3 feet. Sunday night, west wind 10-15 knots, increasing to 15-20 knots after midnight. Gusts up to 30 knots. Waves 2-4 feet.

TIDES

Sunday's sunrise 7:07, sunset 4:45. High tides: 9:28 a.m., 9:57 p.m. Low tides: 2:44 a.m., 3:13 p.m. Monday's sunrise 7:07, sunset 4:46. High tides: 10:06 a.m., 10:37 p.m. Low tides: 3:22 a.m., 3:44 p.m.

Forest Farm Adult Day Services
193 Forest Avenue, Middletown
Pleasant, safe, caring atmosphere providing socialization, recreation, crafts, group exercise class, nutritious noon meal, podiatry service, hairdresser service and much more for adults 55 years or older. Our program offers respite for caregivers.
Monday-Friday 8:00 AM-3 PM
For more information, please call
Elizabeth Goodwin, Director 849-8326

The Pennfield School
JOY • UNDERSTANDING • RESPECT

Giving students an appreciation for the joyful pursuit of knowledge and understanding.
OPEN HOUSE
Friday, January 24
8-10 a.m.
RSVP today! Call **401.849.4646** or email **contact@pennfield.org.**
FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE. OFFERING A MERIT AND A SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP. SEE WWW.PENNFIELD.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.
Little Slocum Farm • 110 Sandy Point Avenue • Portsmouth, RI
AN INDEPENDENT DAY SCHOOL FOR PRE-SCHOOL (AGE 3) – EIGHTH GRADE