

## **Recycling used oil - fueling the economy and protecting the environment**

*350 million litres of new lubricant oil is sold in South Africa every year. This new oil is a combination of locally manufactured, as well as imported lubes. Of all the oil that is sold, approximately 150 million litres becomes used oil, of which 120 million litres is collectable for recycling. Retrieving and recycling this product has proved to be a lucrative enterprise that creates a circular economy and protects the environment.*

The ROSE Foundation (Recycling Oil Saves The Environment), a non-profit organisation responsible for driving the recycling of used oil in South Africa for the past 25 years, describes the used oil recycling industry as a thriving success story on many levels.

"Used oil is full of contaminants that are dangerous to the environment and as such it is classified as a hazardous substance that must be disposed of responsibly through a recycling process - One litre of used oil can contaminate one million litres of water if it seeps into our water catchments," explains Bubele Nyiba, CEO of the ROSE Foundation.

"Recycling used oil not only protects the environment, but also creates cost efficient products for our economy, such as burner fuel for furnaces – which is exactly what sustainable recycling should achieve."

"Most used oil in South Africa is partially processed to remove certain impurities then is recycled into burner fuel. Many industries in South Africa use burner fuel in furnaces and kilns during the manufacturing and production of their products. If these manufacturers had to only use virgin burner fuel, rather than recycled products, the cost of production would escalate dramatically - and this cost would naturally be passed on to the consumer."

Nyiba highlights a few industries that use kilns and furnaces: "Tire, cement, tile and brick manufacturers, commercial bakeries, distilleries, fruit canneries, jam factories and diesel powered electricity plants, are only a few examples of businesses that use burner fuels in their production processes. So when you buy bread, and the jam to put on it, or change your cars tyres, or do home renovations - you are reaping the

benefits of a lower cost to customer product, because the manufacturer could rely on cheaper recycled burner fuels made out of used oil," says Nyiba.

The practice of recycling used oil into burner fuels, saves a significant amount of money every year that would have otherwise been spent on more expensive virgin burner oil. It fuels a thriving used oil recycling industry that employs many hundreds of South Africans – from the used oil collectors themselves, to the employees at the processing facilities that recycle the used oil.

The ROSE Foundation has championed the responsible collection of over 1.5 billion litres of used oil in South Africa since its inception 25 years ago. "ROSE has proved that recycling protects the environment, creates widespread employment opportunities and has a knock on financial benefit for many," concludes Nyiba.

"All recycling models needs to be sustainable and need to work to towards a circular economy to be viable in the long term."

For more information on ROSE visit [www.rosefoundation.org.za](http://www.rosefoundation.org.za) or email: [usedoil@iafrica.com](mailto:usedoil@iafrica.com).