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Vegetable oil fuels bicycle tour vans

LAS VEGAS, Nevada (AP) --

A Las Vegas tour company is using leftover oil from restaurants to fuel a fleet of vans, showing that recycling can work even in a city known for excess.

Story Highlights

- Vegas-based tour company using leftover oil from restaurants to fuel a fleet of vans
- Escape Adventures offers bicycle trips into Red Rock Canyon outside Las Vegas
- Escape Adventures has collected about 3,000 gallons of oil from restaurants
- The company has saved more than \$9,000

Escape Adventures is an 18-year-old company that offers bicycle trips into Red Rock Canyon outside Las Vegas and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

What makes Escape trips different from other helicopter tours or limousine cruises is that owner Jared Fisher spends about four to six hours a week driving to restaurants to siphon used oil from containers near the trash bins.

"It is kind of nice to escape the office," Fisher said. "I can read a book while I'm pumping grease."

So far this year he has collected about 3,000 gallons. That amounts to more than \$9,000 in savings -- almost enough to pay for the cost of modifications to make six diesel vehicles in Escape's fleet capable of running on vegetable oil.

The trucks run on diesel or vegetable oil, a feature that came in handy on a recent morning when Fisher realized the tank was near empty.

"I actually had to go raid my kitchen cabinet last night for corn oil," Fisher said. "But that's what is great -- you can cook with it; you can put it in your truck."