

Local man with a new enterprise

by Paul Barnsley

SIX NATIONS - When Allan Miller's gas bar at 69 Corners re-opens this coming Monday morning, Six Nations' drivers will have a choice - unleaded gasoline or gasoline blended with ethanol.

Ethanol is made by distilling corn. A fuel mixture of up to 10% ethanol in gasoline will dramatically reduce hydrocarbon emissions in automobile exhaust and increase the octane rating of the fuel at the same time, without the need for any modifications to a vehicle's engine. Fuel with a high octane rating will burn more cleanly.

Miller says he decided to introduce this alternative fuel to Six Nations after reading about smog alerts and an increase in the risk of skin cancer in Southern Ontario.

"It says a lot to me that Southern Ontario has the highest levels of pollution in the province," he says. "We're right in it. Short of moving north and hiding, we've got to do something."

The Canadian Renewable Fuels

Association, a Guelph-based group that lobbies for the expanded use of renewable fuels, is especially supportive of ethanol. Its president, Jim Johnson, says Miller is part of a growing movement in Canada.

"Mohawk Oil was the only company selling ethanol in Canada 2 to 3 years ago and they only sold it in the west," Johnson said.

"Now, there's almost 600 stations in this country. They have to import it from the U.S. because the demand has exceeded the supply in Canada."

Johnson explained the reasons why he and his group of envi-

ronmentally concerned colleagues are so bullish on the fuel.

"Ethanol is the same as the alcohol in beer or wine or spirits except it's produced without concern for taste. It's not

designed to be potable," he said. "The more ethanol in the mix, the more oxygen is available and the more complete the combustion. A complete

combustion produces fewer waste hydrocarbons which reduces smog."

Miller says using ethanol will actually clean out your engine and improve performance. Johnson says that's possible,

although different vehicles respond differently when they are switched over.

"Over billions of miles, there have been no documented cases where ethanol has damaged an engine," says Johnson.

In addition to the advantages

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of reducing perhaps the leading cause of pollution - automobile emissions - and the ease of changing from traditional gasoline to the new fuel, there is one other crucial advantage to ethanol. Petroleum products are non-renewable whereas a new crop of corn comes along every year.

Johnson says most of the corn producers have switched to soybean farming in recent years which has driven down the price of soybeans and cut their earning power. An increase in demand for corn, as ethanol production increases, will be a boon to farmers.

Miller says the new fuel mixes with gasoline without complica-