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## Veggie oil powers cleaners' van

By **ROB NAY, SUN MEDIA**

Running on vegetable oil, this green machine aims to help save the environment and lower fuel costs for a Winnipeg-based dry cleaning company.

"This was just the right way to go," said Shane Johnston, general manager for Dollar Wise Quality Cleaners.

### GREEN INITIATIVES

Last week the company introduced a specially outfitted vehicle to pick up dry cleaning orders from clients across the city.

Johnston said the company spent about \$1,600 equipping the 1991 Volkswagen diesel cargo van with a veggie oil system at Frank Motors.

"We just found the greenest product we could," said Johnston, a cancer survivor who began researching environmentally-friendly alternatives while he was in hospital years ago.

The van is the latest in a series of green initiatives the company has introduced, including using environmentally-friendly laundry detergent.

The vehicle accelerates and handles the same as a regular van, said Johnston. He said a number of his friends at restaurants have been helping out by donating vegetable oil.

"It's a good thing I eat out a lot," Johnston said with a laugh.

Frank Motors picks up the vegetable oil from restaurants and then cleans out any food products from it, making it ready for fuel purposes, charging about 23 cents per litre for it once it's ready, said Johnston.

The van's engine starts by first running diesel fuel and then an automated system switches it to run off vegetable oil once the engine has warmed up.

He estimates the green van will help Dollar Wise save about \$16,000 on fuel charges each year.



**Shane Johnston, general manager for Dollar Wise Quality Cleaners, said a new van equipped to run on vegetable oil will save his company \$16,000 a year. (Jason Halstead/Sun Media)**