

# KAMLOOPS The Daily News

Saturday, September 16, 2006



Daily News file photo

**NEXTERRA ENERGY** Corp. president Jonathan Rhone, left, talks with Jim Baskerville, Tolko's regional manager for veneer and plywood.

'THERE'S A HUGE AMOUNT OF POSSIBILITIES OUT THERE'

## Gas plant officially opens

By **MICHELE YOUNG**  
Daily News Staff Reporter

Officials had a gas Friday as they toured the new gasification plant at Tolko's Hefley Creek veneer and plywood plant.

The entourage included B.C. Energy and Mines Minister Cliff Neufeld.

The gasification plant turns waste wood from the operation into "syngas," which is then converted into cheap, clean thermal energy.

The technology will save Tolko an estimated \$1.5 million per year, which amounts to 40 per cent of its natural-gas costs.

Jim Baskerville, Tolko's region-

al manager for veneer and plywood operations, said that's 40 per cent saved, 60 per cent to go.

The new technology also saves the environment from 12,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year.

Similar plants would cost \$5 million to \$10 million to build, he estimated.

In Tolko's case, the federal government chipped in \$2 million and the province added about \$100,000 to the pie because there was research and development involved.

Neufeld said he'd like to see other, bigger gasification plants built now that Tolko's is established.

"There's a huge amount of possibilities out there," he said, referring not just to operations such as Tolko's but also to the fact that B.C. is having to find ways to deal with all the pine-beetle-killed wood in the province and gasification might be one part of the answer.

Nexterra Energy Corp. developed the technology used in the gasification plant. President Jonathan Rhone credited Baskerville with taking a chance on the new system.

Baskerville explained that while Nexterra built a small-scale pilot of the plant for trials for a year, there was nothing for him to see up and running when

Tolko decided to jump on board.

"We couldn't go and see this operating somewhere else," he said. "We had to look at pictures."

Rhone agreed with Neufeld that there will be more such plants built in the future.

"This project is not a one-off. It's a real springboard for this company," he said.

"We believe gasification has a role to play in our energy future."

He lauded Tolko for getting involved in the project, which saw the plant actually start up in May. Friday's event marked the official grand opening.

"They're a tremendous bunch of doers," he said.