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**Sapphire Energy Named to Biofuels Digest “50 Hottest Companies in Bioenergy” Ranking**  
*Top Algae-Based Fuel Company Number Two Overall*

**SAN DIEGO** – Algae-based fuels, one of the most promising technological developments to positively transform the world’s transportation industry, gained additional momentum today when Biofuels Digest ranked Sapphire Energy, an algae-based transportation fuels company, number 2 in its 2008 “50 Hottest Companies in Bioenergy” rankings. Sapphire Energy was selected out of more than 1,000 bioenergy companies eligible and was the highest-rated algae-to-energy company receiving the accolade.

“With climate change and clean energy at the top of President-elect Obama’s energy agenda and a priority topic in businesses and homes around the globe, Biofuels Digest’s recognition is further validation that algae-based fuels have a definite role to play in the new energy economy,” said Jason Pyle, Sapphire Energy CEO. “We couldn’t be more proud of the honor.”

Sapphire Energy is an energy exploration and production company that uses a proprietary technology to create Green Crude, a renewable liquid fuel, similar to light sweet crude, which can be refined into carbon-neutral transportation fuels such as gasoline, jet fuel and diesel. The company, led by a team of experts in transportation fuels, cell biology, plant genomics and algal production, is creating a commercial-scale crude oil operation using only sunlight, carbon dioxide and non-potable water.

“Nine companies pursuing algae-to-energy made this year’s list, but Sapphire Energy topped them all,” said Jim Lane, Biofuels Digest editor and chairman of the American Biofuels Council. “Though a young company, Sapphire has wowed the industry with a credible, exciting technology path and a superb team.”

The rankings were established by a Biofuels Digest panel, and reflected the importance of research or production achievements recorded by each company in 2008. Votes were weighted by industry and region to ensure a fair and broad representation of companies and technologies.

Biofuels Digest is the world's most-widely read biofuels daily, reaching 15,000 industry leaders, policymakers, journalists, producers and suppliers in 195 countries. Available via free daily email newsletter or at [BiofuelsDigest.com](http://BiofuelsDigest.com), the Digest produces the "50 Hottest Companies in Bioenergy" rankings and the Biofuels Digest Index™, a biofuels equities benchmark.

Sapphire will be recognized, along with other honorees, on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at a presentation in conjunction with World Biofuels Markets Brussels Expo, and on April 20, 2009 at an award presentation for all Biofuels Digest 2008 award winners in Washington DC in conjunction with the Advanced Biofuels Development Summit.

"This recognition from our peers is tremendously satisfying, and supports the growing interest in the algae-based fuels industry by policymakers and business alike," continued Pyle. "We founded Sapphire Energy to create the perfect fuel, a carbon-neutral replacement for fossil fuels that would have positive impacts not only on transportation but also on world energy security, climate change and the global food supply. We're proud that our vision is making a real impact."

### **About Sapphire Energy**

Sapphire Energy was founded to address the overwhelming inadequacies of current biofuel approaches. The company has built a revolutionary platform using sunlight, CO<sub>2</sub> and microorganisms such as algae to produce renewable fuel products – gasoline, jet fuel and diesel that meet ASTM standards. The final product is not ethanol or biodiesel. Sapphire is led by a team of entrepreneurs and experts in cell biology, plant genomics and algal production, as well as investors with long histories of taking innovative technology to market, including co-founder ARCH Venture Partners, along with the Wellcome Trust, Cascade Investment and Venrock. Sapphire's scientific supporters include The Scripps Research Institute; University of California, San Diego; the

University of Tulsa, and the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Project. The company is located in San Diego. For more information, visit [www.sapphireenergy.com](http://www.sapphireenergy.com) and [www.greencrudeproduction.com](http://www.greencrudeproduction.com).

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