



Press release

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Autogrill and Gruppo Hera team up for environmental sustainability

An important framework agreement is signed by the multiutility and the foodservice operator to develop circular economy initiatives. The first project – recovery and transformation into biofuel of over 100 tonnes of spent vegetable oils produced by over 70 Autogrill points of sale throughout Italy – is ready to go.

Autogrill, a leading travel foodservice provider, and Gruppo Hera, a major Italian multiutility, today signed a memorandum of intent to work together on initiatives in the fields of circular economy, sustainable mobility and environmental communication in line with the sustainable development goals defined in the UN's Agenda 2030.

The 1-year agreement between the two businesses, both of which have been working for years on projects to guarantee transition to an increasingly circular economy, provides for gradual development of a series of environmental measures in around 390 Autogrill foodservice points in Italy. In addition to solutions for boosting the efficiency of waste management, plastics recycling, combating food waste and waste reclamation and prevention of waste production, there will be joint information and communication activities addressing both customers and employees at Autogrill. Working with companies like Autogrill, which serves millions of customers throughout Italy every year, enables Gruppo Hera to extend the reach of its business for the purpose of sharing best practice and fostering a circular economy culture.

The first project to start up provides for the collection of over 100 tonnes of spent vegetable oil produced in over 70 Autogrill foodservice points. This is oil left over after food preparation (eg. oil used for frying or preserving food), which will be recovered to support sustainable mobility. Once pre-treated, these oils will go to a biorefinery in Porto Marghera (Venice), where they will be turned into biofuel thanks to the partnership between Gruppo Hera and Eni.

“This agreement with Autogrill, a world-leading F&B provider, is a further example of how Gruppo Hera can act as a strategic partner for industry in our country, as well as for its institutions, in the transition to a circular economy, a new paradigm of development in which materials live on as long as possible to generate economic, environmental and social benefits at the same time,” said **Gruppo Hera CEO Orazio Iacono**. “Regeneration of resources is one of Hera's *raison d'être*, in line with its corporate purpose, and the progress we're making in this context puts the communities we serve to the forefront and well in advance of European targets for stepping up recycling and minimization of waste disposal via landfill. Building on decades of experience and results to date, we intend to work more and more with companies to reduce and recycle waste through circularity projects like those contemplated in the agreement signed today with Autogrill.”

“Integration of sustainability into our business is a priority goal for Autogrill,” commented **Autogrill Italy CEO Massimiliano Santoro**. “Going in this direction, our collaboration with Gruppo Hera will boost circular economy projects capable of generating value by harnessing innovation to sustainability. The recycling of materials used in our points of sale, for example, is an opportunity to create and sustain an efficient waste reclamation industry that contributes to the wellbeing of the community. Now more than ever, it's important for businesses to join forces for common objectives, so everyone can do their bit towards safeguarding the planet's resources.”



Solutions for efficiently managing waste, regenerating plastics, reducing food waste, preventing the production of waste and studying recyclable materials

The sheer amount of economic, social and environmental change in this period is making businesses do some very serious thinking. They can no longer be content with their efforts to contain negative impacts. They need new business models that favour increasingly efficient use of resources and combat waste. Sustainability must necessarily be a common goal, one that's only achievable through collaboration between business, government and citizens. In this light, Autogrill's and Gruppo Hera's joint commitment to circular economy can be an answer to communities' needs and the challenges facing society.

With this agreement, the two operators are embarking on a collaboration on a number of different projects ranging from sustainable mobility solutions to circular economy initiatives and environmental communication.

The first step will be to study Autogrill's waste production data and consider optimal waste reclamation solutions from an environmental and economic viewpoint, with special reference to circular economy, and also projects to combat food waste and to reuse surplus food, including for solidarity purposes. Organic waste produced in certain foodservice points will be used to produce biomethane and compost in Gruppo Hera's facilities, while spent vegetable oils (suitably sorted and collected) will go to biofuel production under a partnership with multiutility Eni.

Gruppo Hera will put at Autogrill's disposal all its know-how in identifying waste management projects, both prevention and efficiency boosting, from collection to treatment. Various actions and initiatives will also be planned for recycling plastics and identifying alternative materials, thus combining the goals of food safety and improving environmental performance. Environmental information and communication produced under co-branding and addressing Autogrill's employees and customers will help spread environmental sustainability culture and promote prevention and correct management of waste.

Gruppo Hera

Gruppo Hera is a major Italian multiutility operating in the environment, energy and water sectors with over 9,000 employees engaged every day in meeting the multiple needs of around 5 million citizens, mostly in Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Toscana and Abruzzo. Listed since 2003, it is one of the top 40 Italian companies by market capitalization (on the Ftse Mib) and has been on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, World and Europe, since 2020.

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Autogrill

Autogrill Group is the the world's leading provider of food & beverage services for travellers. It operates in 774 locations in 30 countries across 4 continents, managing around 3,300 points of sale (of which around 390 in Italy), and is present in 139 airports. Autogrill can count on around 46,000 employees.

www.autogrill.com

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