Well Resources Files Patent To Use Heavy Oil Byproduct For Soil, Water Remediation

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Calgary-based refining technology company **Well Resources Inc.** says a "surprising discovery" from one of its processes has led to an opportunity to use asphaltenes, the heaviest portion of the heavy oil and oilsands bbl, for environmental remediation.

Well's SELEX Asp technology extracts asphaltenes as dry, solid granules that can be easily handled, replacing the need for more costly and energy intensive conventional asphaltene management systems using hydrogen addition and carbon rejection. The company says there is 36,500 bbls/d of SELEX Asp capacity installed globally.

The new patent filing says that those solid granule asphaltenes can be used to address important environmental issues, particularly for industrial-scale water treatment and soil remediation. The patent further discusses methods of

transforming asphaltenes into fibers, mats, and fillers for various applications, including its use as containing-materials for bioreactors that have a water decontamination effect.

Well says that, in collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, it has entered into discussions with a municipality in Southern China to utilize asphaltenes in one of China's six major river decontamination projects.

“We can now use petroleum by-product as a low-cost substance to remediate contaminated water and soil and mitigate against future contamination,” Well president **Warren Chung** said in a statement.

“The non-combustion uses of these asphaltenes has an added benefit of providing significant carbon storage for the petroleum industry.”

This article has been updated from an earlier version

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