

# NEW YORK TIMES

*NYT Critics' Pick*

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## **Treating Oil Addiction**

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Published: September 18, 2009

“Fuel,” Josh Tickell’s unabashedly intimate, 11-years-in-the-making attack on America’s addiction to oil, is not so much a green documentary as a red, white and blue alarm. But if you can resist the urge to run for the exit, you may leave the theater feeling a lot more hopeful than when you went in.

A sustainable-energy evangelist whose church is a van that runs on grease, Mr. Tickell contends that the oil industry poisons our environment, corrupts our government and cooks our planet. Galvanized by a childhood spent among the oil refineries and pollution problems of Louisiana, Mr. Tickell was an early adopter of alternative fuels. But his exhaustively wide-ranging film is more than an expression of personal affront: though his mother, Deborah Dupré, suffered nine miscarriages (“Factor that into the cost of gasoline,” he says), “Fuel” seldom feels vindictive.

Thanks to an informative, buoyant tone and the director’s own restless intelligence, the film preaches to the unconverted with passion, energy and graphics so clear that they would make Al Gore weep all over his PowerPoint.

Bustling with politicians, scientists and card-carrying green celebrities, “Fuel” reveals the terrifying complexity of our energy crisis, as well as Mr. Tickell’s commitment to the truth. (The film was completely re-edited to include recent biodiesel controversies.)

“We cannot drill our way out of this,” says one of the film’s many experts; but as “Fuel” zealously argues, our chances of thinking our way out are very good indeed.

FUEL

Opens on Friday in New York and San Francisco and Berkeley, Calif.

Directed by Josh Tickell; written by Johnny O’hara; director of photography, James Mulryan; edited by Tina Imahara and Michael Horwitz; music by Ryan Demaree and Edgar Rothermich; produced by Greg Reitman, Dale Rosenbloom, Daniel Assael, Darius Fisher and Rebecca Harrell; released by Greenlight Theatrical. In Manhattan at the AMC Empire 25, 234 West 42nd Street. Running time: 1 hour 51 minutes. This film is not rated.