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Energy

## Exclusive: Houston specialty refiner awards \$255M contract to build first facility 🔑

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David Schwedel is founder and executive director of Encina.

DARIO MALDONADO



By **Joshua Mann** – Senior reporter, Houston Business Journal  
May 29, 2020, 10:34am EDT

Houston-based Encina Development Group LLC has awarded an engineering, procurement and construction deal to Australia-based Worley Ltd. to build the specialty refiner's first commercial-scale facility.

The EPC contract is for about \$255 million, Encina's founder and executive director, **David Schwedel**, said in an emailed response to questions. Encina, which refines waste plastic into chemicals and gasoline blendstock, is looking to break ground at the end of the first quarter of 2021, and it is estimating an 18-month timeline for construction after that, Schwedel said.

The company hasn't yet settled on a site for the project, but it has narrowed the selection down to five potential locations. Schwedel said he couldn't comment on which five location he is considering because of nondisclosure agreements.

The project will employ about 450 workers during peak construction and 100 employees on a permanent basis once commercial operations begin, Schwedel said.

This project is just the first step in a larger plan for the company, Schwedel said [in an interview with the Houston Business Journal earlier this year](#). With massive volumes of plastic waste being produced worldwide, Schwedel and his team are eyeing a global growth approach, with potential future assets in the Philippines, South Africa, Belgium and Brazil, he said.

“Unfortunately for the world, there’s a global problem with waste plastic,” Schwedel said. “But, fortunately for us, there’s a global problem with waste plastic.”

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