

The Benefits of Using Biomass

Advancing Education and Outreach on Biomass Thermal Energy

The Challenge

Over 30 percent of U.S. energy consumption is used to produce thermal energy for heating and cooling. Biomass has the potential to provide a renewable source of thermal energy for millions of residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the United States. However, this potential is not widely known. Many prospective customers and investors are unaware of the technology or are unsure of its benefits. Education and outreach resources that help people make sound decisions about using biomass for heat are needed.

The Solution

The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Wood Education and Resource Center awarded a grant to the Biomass Thermal Energy Council (BTEC) to develop educational resources about the potential and economic benefits of using biomass for heating in the United States. BTEC created a series of factsheets, videos, audio interviews, Webinars, and a comprehensive industry presentation to increase awareness among industry, customers, landowners, policymakers, and the general public about using biomass as an energy source.

BTEC developed resources that cover a wide range of topics—an overview of the U.S. biomass thermal market, regional perspectives on the outlook of biomass, legislation, regulation, air quality, public perception of biomass thermal energy, and the role of agriculture and the landowner in the biomass thermal energy supply chain.

Heating with biomass offers the United States a unique opportunity to use local, environmentally friendly energy sources to offset imported fossil fuels.

—www.AmericanBiomass.net

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A conveyor belt transports wood chips up to a hopper to fuel a biomass thermal energy system.

Resulting Benefits

All materials developed through the grant are available at www.biomassthermal.org under the “Resource Center” tab. These resources include:

- A series of 14 Webinars that were attended by 2,458 people and have been viewed online by an additional 1,373 people.
- Five factsheets that have been accessed 1,300 times.
- Ten audio interviews that have been accessed 700 times.
- Two industry tour videos.
- A 105–page comprehensive industry presentation that has been downloaded 168 times.

Sharing Success

- This effort establishes stronger networks for biomass thermal technology transfer and information sharing in the forest products industry,
- BTEC has included biomass thermal energy factsheets in presentations to personnel at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Energy, International Biomass Expo, Heating the Midwest trade shows, and Heating the Northeast trade shows.



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