

Biofuels- How Impacting the Greenhouse Effect Impacts Power Boilers

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Risk Engineering



- "Green energy " sign of the times?
- •2012 Zurich discusses energy produced by solar boilers
- •2013 Issues with biogas as a fuel
- •2014 Biofuels- How Impacting the Greenhouse Effect Impacts Power Boilers





Objectives

Discover available sources of biomass

Use of biomass in power generation

Challenges of using biomass as boiler fuel

Discover some lessons learned as the use of biomass has grown over the last 25 years.



Future mainstream use of liquid biofuels – transportation

Biofuels in solid form used for boiler fuel are categorized as biomass and is the subject we will explore today.

Biomass- Power Boilers



Current status of biomass power generation in the United States.

 Biomass installed capacity – 16 gigawatts or about 1.4 percent of total installed generating capacity in North America. Data derived from Ventyx Global LLC, Velocity Suite

• The United States added 549 MW of biomass fired power plants in 2013. U.S. Energy Infrastructure Administration

Biomass – Power Boilers



This 58 MW biomass plant in Anderson, CA, produces low-cost electricity from wood byproducts. NREL is DOE's lead laboratory for biomass power R & D.

Photo by Warren Getz, NREL, Image #00298



Biomass- Power Boilers



Biomass sources

- Wood chips & pellets
- Wood wastes
- Construction scrap wood and demolition debris
- Agricultural wastes
- Animal processing byproducts
- Forest residues from logging
 - Removal of insect damaged trees





Biomass Sources cont'd

- Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)
- Tire Derived Fuel (TDF)
- Sludge from municipal and process effluent
- Black and Red spent liquors
- Energy crops

Biomass – Power Boilers



Clear, dry wood chips arrive at a wood-fired power plant.

Photo by Warren, Getz, NREL #01766



Biomass – Power Boilers



Municipal Landfill

Photo by David Parsons, NREL #5292







Future biomass sources under development

• Additional varieties of short rotation energy crops.



Biomass Fired Power Boilers

- Input range from 20 tons/hour to over 250 tons/hour
- Most common biomass combustion systems are stoker grates and fluidized beds.
- Co-firing conversions using coal

Biomass Facilities



U.S. BIOMASS FACILITIES



www.biomasspowerassociation.com

Biomass Sources – Forests



Source: USDA, Forest Service's Timber Product Output database, 2007



Biomass Sources - barley straw, corn stover, oat straw, sorghum stubble, and wheat straw.



Projections of Agricultural Residues at \$50/dry ton (ORNL, 2011)



2012 2030

Biomass Sources – Domestic Distribution of Agricultural Wastes



Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service; five-year average: 2003-2007



Biomass Facilities



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Biomass - Primary Mill Sources



Source: USDA, Forest Service's Timber Product Output database, 2007



Biomass – Secondary Mill Sources



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 County Business Patterns







So we see Biomass resources are available throughout the United States.





Why use biomass for fuel?

- Saves valuable landfill space
- Provides an end use for waste products
- Assists in forest management hazard reduction programs
- Contributes to the local economy
- Provides an alternative to fossil fuels





Why use biomass for fuel?

• Environmental regulations



The CO2 emitted from biomass-based fuels combustion does not increase atmospheric CO2 concentrations, assuming the biogenic carbon emitted is offset by the uptake of CO2 resulting from the growth of new biomass." The United States Environmental Protection Agency, 74 Fed. Reg. 24,904, 25,039 (May 26, 2009).



"The record shows that electric generation using biomass that would otherwise be disposed of under a variety of conventional methods (such as open burning, forest accumulation, landfills, composting) results in a substantial net reduction in GHG emissions." California Public Utilities Commission, January 2007, Decision 07-01-039

Biomass - Power Boilers



Challenges of using Biomass in boilers.

- Variable physical properties of biomass must be accounted for in boiler design.
- Abrasive characteristics of some biomass fuels.
- Increased operator interaction controlling the combustion process.
- Co firing with coal
- Transportation costs
- Increasing competition for low priced biomass sources.

Biomass – Power Boilers



Methods to help reduce problems.

- Select proven fuel feed systems
- Use dedicated feeder systems for specific biomass sources or,
- Consider blending differing biomass fuels into a homogeneous mixture before the fuel enters the boiler.
- Loader operator training in proper handling of biomass fuels.
- Adding processing equipment to handle a variety of fuels





Methods to help reduce problems.

• Abrasive characteristics of some biomass fuels.

Use cladding or shielding to extend boiler tube life in high wear areas.

Biomass- Power Boilers



• Emerging / Maturing Technologies

Biomass – Power Boilers



Future studies recently awarded involve:

- The use of flue gas to dry wood chips
- Development of a solid biofuel that has potential for direct, stand-in use at power generation facilities.
- Development of distributed generation in rural environments using rural biomass as fuel.



 As our scientists and engineers seek new ways to generate power for our growing population centers, one of our responsibilities is to learn new technologies and adaptations of existing technologies to identify adverse trends and conditions impacting boilers we inspect.



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