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## **Focus on Energy Awards Grants for Renewable Energy Projects**

*- More than \$650,000 in grants awarded to bioenergy projects -*

**MADISON, Wis. (June 12, 2008)** - Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, has awarded grants totaling more than \$650,000, to help finance three Wisconsin bioenergy projects. Bioenergy is energy derived from any biological material that can be used as fuel; this fuel is burned or converted in systems that produce heat, electricity, or both heat and power. The bioenergy projects being funded include a municipal anaerobic digester and two biomass energy systems.

“When completed, these projects will generate approximately 100 kilowatts and 744,600 kilowatt hours of electricity per year - as well as replacing 2.7 million therms of natural gas,” said Don Wichert, Focus on Energy Director of Renewable Energy Program. “That is enough electricity to power 75 average Wisconsin homes and provide the equivalent heating for 2,784 homes.”

Not only will the bioenergy projects help offset energy costs, they'll have a positive effect on the environment. The annual environmental benefits of these three projects are equivalent to offsetting 372 tons of coal from being burned, and the emissions from 2,419 cars and 16,678 tons of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from being released into the atmosphere.

### **Grant Recipients**

- **The City of Burlington Waste Water Treatment Facility** was awarded a grant to upgrade and expand its anaerobic digestion and heat exchange system to generate electricity and capture processing heat for use at its facility. The upgrade also allows the plant to meet projected capacity loads to the year 2027 while improving current operation of the facility.
- **Mullins Cheese, Inc.** was awarded a grant to install a wood boiler system for generating process steam for its cheese plant in Knowlton, Wis., four miles south of Mosinee, Wis. The existing natural gas boilers at the cheese plant will continue to be used for back-up. Mullins Cheese is in its third generation of cheesemakers and employs approximately 100 people. The purchase of wood fuel for the boiler will have a significant impact on the local lumber, wood processing and trucking firms that will benefit from the additional revenue.

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- **Domtar Paper Company, LLC** was awarded a grant to retrofit a boiler at their plant in Rothschild, Wis. The boiler revamping will save energy through a combination of increased combustion efficiency and the capacity to burn more wood fuel through an improved fuel handling system. After the changes, the plant will be able to burn about 5,000 more tons of wood bark fuel than before. The modifications will also decrease air pollution caused by combustion inefficiencies.

### **About Anaerobic Digestion**

Anaerobic digestion is the bacterial decomposition of organic matter that occurs in the absence of oxygen. An anaerobic digester system is an enclosed tank that excludes oxygen and through which organic matter is passed and broken down by naturally occurring bacteria, producing biogas. This biogas is composed of approximately 55 percent to 70 percent methane. The methane produced in the process can be used in an engine-generator to produce electricity or in a biogas boiler to produce heat.

### **About Biomass Energy**

Biomass energy systems use renewable resources, such as wood waste or agricultural based residues, to produce heat. This is an alternative to using natural gas for heating buildings. Focus on Energy only supports clean burning biomass systems that meet the high standards of the Environmental Protection Agency ratings for air emissions.

Wisconsin is fortunate to have a thriving wood-based products industry. Both sawmills and wood products companies find that the abundance of timber makes Wisconsin a good place to do business. The wood waste that companies pay to dispose of can be used in their own operations to save energy and improve the environment. Currently, more than 200 companies and institutions in Wisconsin use wood in biomass combustion systems for heating.

### **Bioenergy Grants Still Available**

Focus on Energy has funding available for dairy farm, industrial and municipal anaerobic digester systems that generate renewable energy, as well as non-residential biomass combustion systems that replace natural gas use.

“With a network of experts across the state and a variety of programs, Focus on Energy can help Wisconsin residents and businesses plan, finance and install renewable energy systems,” explained Don Wichert, Focus on Energy Director of Renewable Energy Program. “Because of incentives like our dairy farm anaerobic digestion and biomass combustion grants, a growing number of Wisconsin residents are using renewable energy.”

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To learn more about Focus on Energy and its Renewable Energy Program, or to find out if you qualify for financial incentives call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

**About Focus on Energy**

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information, call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

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