

NEWS

From GEORGIA TECH'S ENGINEERING EXPERIMENT STATION

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INDUSTRY SWITCH TO WOOD
BASED ON TECHNOLOGY

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For Immediate Release

More industries than ever are using wood for fuel, but more would make the switch from fossil fuels if they could be sure that wood boilers and gasifiers worked well, and that an adequate supply of wood was available.

This was the major finding of a Georgia Tech survey of more than 200 industries in the Southeast to find ways to increase the use of wood for industrial purposes. The study was prepared for the Georgia Forestry Commission under the sponsorship of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Dr. T. I. Chiang, a co-author of the study, said that a more reliable technology is the number one concern of the industrial boiler users who repoded.

"More than one-third of the industries said that improved technology is the most important incentive for a switch to wood-fueled boilers and gasifiers," said Chiang. Gasifiers turn wood into fuel gas which can then be burned in boilers or direct-fired heaters.

Also high on the list was the need for an assured wood supply. Most respondents had wood nearby but preferred long-term contracts for a supply at known prices.

Of lesser importance were tax write-offs and capital loans. Only five percent felt that capital loans were a good incentive while 18 percent felt a tax write-off would work.

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The industrial users generally supported the idea of government money for research to improve wood-burning technology.

Chiang said that the survey showed that the use of wood-fired boilers is on the rise, particularly in rural areas where there is a better chance of having a guaranteed supply of wood.