

GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH

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News Release

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INDUSTRIES CONSIDER WOOD

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WASTES AS ALTERNATIVE FUEL

For Immediate Release

ATLANTA, GA....Manufacturers in Georgia are looking increasingly to wood wastes as a possible source of industrial fuel.

"Industries were considering them last year but not nearly as much as they are now," said Grant Curtis, an engineer in Georgia Tech's Wood Energy Group.

Rising fuel costs and concerns about available supplies have helped create this interest. Five years ago, the price of natural gas, then the least expensive fossil fuel, stood at approximately 40 cents per million Btu's compared to \$1.50 for wood.

Today those figures have changed dramatically and natural gas costs \$3.25 per million Btu's while wood has held relatively stable at \$1.88.

Why aren't more manufacturers opting for wood? The capital costs for installation and maintenance are five to 10 times higher than those necessary for oil or natural gas. Still, Curtis said, the fuel pricing factor is beginning to outweigh all other considerations.

The attraction of wood wastes is that they already exist in usable form -- as discarded sawdust in lumber yards or fragments of trees left in the forest when woodlands are cleared. Curtis estimates that Georgia could meet around 20 percent of its annual energy requirements by using its wood wastes more thoroughly.

Georgia Tech's Wood Energy Group offers help to industries seeking dependable

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