



Illinois Sustainable Technology Center
PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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Illinois Sustainable Technology Center Seeks Businesses for Wood Heating Study

Project examines potential cost benefits of converting from propane and other fossil fuels to wood-fired boiler systems.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. – The Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) at the University of Illinois invites businesses throughout the state to apply for a free engineering study to learn about the potential cost savings of using low-value wood residues as heat.

Illinois businesses have until December 31, 2017 to sign up for this offer to evaluate the feasibility of switching from propane or other fuel sources to wood biomass. The ISTC is wrapping up a two-year wood fuel study made possible through a matching grant of \$249,328 from the U.S. Forest Service. Partners of the study include Western Illinois University's Value-Added Sustainable Development Center and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

So far, the ISTC has helped six greenhouse operations of various sizes gain insight into the costs of converting to wood heat, including the return on investment of installing a wood boiler system. Now the ISTC is expanding the scope of its study by offering the opportunity of a free engineering study to all Illinois businesses.

Those selected to participate in the research project will receive assistance with project scoping, engineering and financial analysis. Small-value applications of less than \$10,000 may be provided direct cash assistance while larger applications will be provided in-kind support of engineering design and grant preparation.

An estimated one million tons of renewable wood in Illinois could be used to displace the use of petroleum-based propane and other fossil fuels. The ISTC's project is examining the scientific, economic and cultural aspects that would support the expansion of utilizing low-value wood residues for energy.

Businesses interested in learning more about applying to have a wood fuel engineering study conducted should contact Sriraam Chandrasekaran, lead research engineer of the ISTC, at 217-300-1477 or schandr@illinois.edu.

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About the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center

The ISTC's mission is to encourage and assist citizens, businesses, and government agencies to prevent pollution, conserve natural resources, and reduce waste to protect human health and the environment of Illinois and beyond. ISTC integrates applied research, technical assistance, and information services to advance efforts in the areas of pollution prevention; water and energy conservation; and materials recycling and beneficial reuse. Learn more at www.istc.illinois.edu.