

Legislative and Policy Directives to Promote Biomass Power in a Time of Cheap Natural Gas

Frederick Tornatore
Chief Technical Officer
TSS Consultants

The historical low price of natural gas, and the likeliness that it will remain low for the foreseeable future, is challenging to bioenergy development, particularly the electricity generation sector. California has acknowledged this challenge and has recently produced several legislative and policy directives to promote community-scale bioenergy in the State. Many of these legislative and policy directives could be emulated in other states in order to facilitate the utilization of their indigenous biomass resources. This presentation will outline what the California legislature and various departments and commissions are doing to support and promote bioenergy development. The presentation will briefly describe the low cost of natural gas and its effect on development of biogas power in the United States. Then it will include discussion of some of the major approaches that California is using to promote biomass power :

- The California Bioenergy Action Plan - California's road map to the future of bioenergy. The plan lays out various courses of action that California agencies must evaluate and implement within the next few years to further enhance bioenergy development in the state.
- SB 1122 - Specifically carves out bioenergy projects in a way to compete on a more even basis with solar and wind
- EPIC - Also carves out significant funding dollars for bioenergy research, development, and deployment
- AB 1900 & AB 2196 - Legislation designed to further develop biomethane injection into the natural gas pipeline system in California
- SB 1 X2 - How California's 33% renewable energy goal will also benefit bioenergy development.
- SB 32 - The further promotion of bioenergy by the state's landmark greenhouse gas reduction program.