



Marches Wood Energy Network

Ironbridge Power Station
Buildwas Road
Telford
Shropshire
TF8 7BL

T. 01952 432814 / 07811 744842
F. 01952 432893

ewan@mwen.org.uk
www.mwen.org.uk

WOOD ENERGY UPDATE

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WOOD FUEL SUPPLY COMPANY LAUNCHED

Midlands Wood Fuel Supply Ltd began operating in August, supplying wood chip fuel to two boilers in Telford. The Company has been formed by Marches Wood Energy Network in order to provide the vital link in the chain between timber producers and wood fuel users.



The first load of timber being delivered, from a local sawmill



Chipping timber from local woodlands



Loading chips for delivery to Oakengates Leisure Centre, Telford

During August, nearly 200 tonnes of timber was chipped and is stored at a Telford farm from where it is loaded for delivery to the two boilers. The boilers will require about 450 tonnes a year.

The fuel is being supplied at prices which are competitive with mains gas and less than half the cost of heating oil.

The operation was established very quickly, in about ten weeks. It has proved that the reliable supply of high quality wood chips for heating is viable. Midlands Wood Fuel will replicate this operation in other parts of the region as new boilers are installed.

A significant proportion of the timber being processed is FSC Certified. We are currently looking at increasing this proportion, and gaining Chain of Custody accreditation which will enable us to sell Certified fuel.

Although the operation has received no financial support or subsidy, Midlands Wood Fuel will be applying for support under the new Bioenergy Infrastructure Scheme recently launched by DEFRA. This would enable the purchase of equipment needed in order to expand.

NEW BOILERS INSTALLED

Telford & Wrekin Council – Oakengates Theatre

This boiler, the second for the Council, was installed in August by Econergy Ltd. It is a 100 kW 'KWB' unit which will serve the base heating load for the Theatre. The site required that the fuel store was located above ground level, inside the building. The solution for delivering chips from a standard trailer, up and into the fuel store is unique to the UK - the chips are tipped into a trough and then blown into the store. Delivery will take place once every two weeks or so.



The 100 kW 'KWB' Boiler



The first load of chips supplied by Midlands Wood Fuel. It takes about half an hour to unload the trailer. When not in use, the chip blower is swung out of the way to enable access to the service area under the Theatre.

Talbott's Heating

Stafford based boiler manufacturers, Talbott's Heating, have recently commissioned a new wood fired heating system at a large country property in the region. Full details will appear in the next Wood Energy Update.

Wenlock Lime, Shropshire

Wenlock Lime supply traditional lime mortars for the restoration of historic buildings. This summer, they installed a small-scale experimental lime kiln, of their own design, fuelled with wood chips. The results of this trial will be reported in the next Update.

BY THE END OF 2004, THERE WILL HAVE BEEN SEVEN NEW, MODERN, WOOD FUELLED HEATING SYSTEMS INSTALLED IN THE REGION IN JUST ONE YEAR, MORE THAN IN THE PREVIOUS TEN YEARS!

NEW BOILERS COMING SOON

Leadon Farm, Herefordshire

Leadon Farm, near Ledbury, is owned by Julian Morgan, Director of 7Y Machinery Ring. Julian has chosen to install a 40 kW 'REFO' wood chip boiler, supplied by Teisen Products of Redditch, to replace his broken oil fired boiler.

Installation is due to be completed shortly. The system has benefited from a capital grant from the Heartwoods Programme.

The Halesend, Storridge, Herefordshire

This 182 hectare farm has 80 hectares of deciduous woodland, and a large house, currently heated using a very old and inefficient wood burning system. The owners have chosen to upgrade to a new 50 kW 'Froeling' log central heating boiler, supplied by Econergy Ltd. The installation should be complete by the new year, and again has been supported by the Heartwoods Programme.

SCHEMES UNDER DEVELOPMENT

NHS

One of the regions NHS Primary Care Trusts has invited tenders for a 400 kW wood chip boiler to heat a community hospital. Depending upon the result of the tendering process, and an application to the Clear Skies programme made by MWEN on their behalf, the boiler could be installed by April 2005.

The Green Wood Trust, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire

MWEN has worked with the Trust to design a wood fired heating system to heat three buildings at their Coalbrookdale site. The system will use a single 50 kW log fired boiler, with the hot water distributed through insulated underground pipework to the buildings.

The project has been awarded some funding from the Clear Skies programme, and the Trust are now seeking match funding for the remainder of the costs.

The Learning Community, Hadley, Telford.

This is an ambitious project to build two new schools and community facilities, on a single site in Hadley. The project is being developed by Telford & Wrekin Council and Interserve Ltd as a Private Finance Initiative.

It is planned to install a 500 kW wood chip boiler to heat the site, which will open in 2006.

OTHER PROJECTS

Large Heat Users

Earlier this year, with support from the Government Office for the West Midlands, MWEN conducted feasibility studies for wood heating a seven large heat use sites: two hospitals, two breweries, a factory, a leisure centre and a diary processing plant.

Wood chip heating was technically viable at six out of the seven sites, and at least one of the sites, a hospital, looks certain to pursue the concept and has invited formal tenders for a boiler installation.

District Heating

MWEN has completed work for the Community Energy Programme, to identify locations throughout the West Midlands where District Heating using wood fuel could be viable. The work identified sixteen locations, ranging from small villages to large urban developments.

Wyre Forest Wood Fuel

The first phase of a research project for English Nature into opportunities for wood fuel in the Wyre Forest, has been completed by MWEN.

The Wyre Forest is one of England's largest areas of woodland. The two principle landowners, the Forestry Commission and English Nature, plan to restore large parts of the Forest from non-native conifers back to native broadleaved species, as well as regenerating coppice and ancient woodland sites.

The first phase identified the potential supply for timber for fuel, and the potential local market. Phase 2 will begin to bring forward actual boiler installations, and develop a supply strategy involving both public and private woodlands owners.

Energy Crops

MWEN is working with farmers and landowners in Worcestershire and Warwickshire to develop the production and use of Short Rotation Coppice in those areas.

REGIONAL FORESTRY FRAMEWORK

The West Midlands Forestry Framework brings together those involved in forestry, woodlands and trees, in both the public and private sectors, from across the region. A Framework Document has been produced which sets out the aims for forestry in the region, and presents an action plan based upon 11 strategic themes. These themes are:

- Woodland Cover
- Woodland and Forestry Industry
- Wood Energy
- Recycling
- Recreation and Tourism
- Health and Wellbeing
- Education, Learning and Skills
- Social Inclusion
- Biodiversity
- Environmental Benefits
- Regeneration

Copies of the Framework are available from the Forestry Commission in Worcester (01905 761220).

For further information contact

Ewan Bent
Director
Marches Wood Energy Network Ltd
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Telford
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