

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF BIOPOWER

The environmental benefits of biomass power generation – using biomass fuel – are clear. By using waste material for fuel in our green energy plants, we prevent that waste from burdening our landfills even more, or being left to decay on the forest floor or urban lot.

The biomass industry diverts more than 30 million tons of organic waste from waste streams each year and turns it into reusable materials. Biopower is clean energy that reduces carbon dioxide emissions by more than 15 million tons a year.

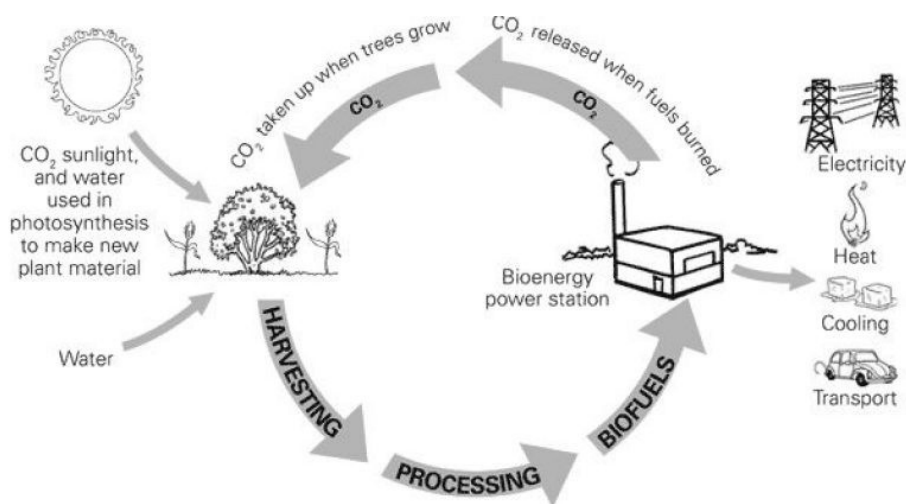
Biomass power is carbon neutral. Any carbon that is released into the atmosphere during combustion of biomass was absorbed from the atmosphere at one point in the tree's life – so what it took out ends up going back. In many cases, the carbon released is re-absorbed by another plant so it never reaches the atmosphere in the first place.



With fossil fuels, the carbon released during combustion has been inaccessible to the atmosphere for millennia and therefore adds additional carbon to the atmosphere.

Biomass power does not threaten forests. It is not economically viable to clear forests or chop down trees solely for the purpose of getting wood to create the green power. The only economically viable fuel for biomass facilities comes from waste byproducts, including construction and demolition and waste wood, that from other industries.

WHY BIOMASS ISN'T A FOSSIL FUEL



Biomass and fossil fuels differ mostly in age. Yes, they are both formed from once-living matter, but the organisms that form fossil fuels lived and absorbed carbon millions of years ago under different environmental conditions.

When fossil fuels are burned, the carbon is released into the atmosphere, but it takes millions of years to be re-absorbed and form new fossil fuels. This means that fossil fuels are adding more carbon to the atmosphere than what is being removed.

Because biomass has a shorter lifecycle, the carbon released when it's burned is the same amount absorbed during its lifetime. The process of producing (growing, harvesting) and converting the biomass does not produce any extra carbon dioxide. This is known as a closed carbon loop and qualifies biomass as a carbon-neutral energy source.

The other big difference between biomass and fossil fuels is that biomass is a renewable energy source because the plant and animal matter it comes from can be regrown or reproduced.