



Wisconsin's Focus on Energy Biogas Incentives

Program Description

Focus on Energy is a statewide program available to eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to support implementation of cost-effective energy efficiency measures, as well as renewable energy projects, through the Renewable Energy Competitive Incentive Program (RECIP). The goal is to provide financial support to applicants that propose the most cost-effective renewable energy projects. Eligible technologies and energy sources include biogas, biomass, geothermal, solar photovoltaic, solar thermal, and wind.

Customers interested in biogas may also have the opportunity to work with Focus on Energy to obtain a custom energy efficiency incentive. The Focus on Energy program has supported biogas projects throughout Wisconsin with technical and financial incentive support since 2002. Biogas feasibility study incentives have been offered since 2014 and have supported feasibility studies across a range of applications, from food products and food processing, to paper manufacturing, to wastewater treatment. Applicants interested in pursuing RECIP funding through Focus on Energy propose potential biogas projects in response to a recurring request for proposal (RFP). Feasibility study applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, as received.



In response to rising landfill disposal fees and energy costs, the Kenosha Water Utility (KWU) redesigned its solids management process to reduce reliance on purchased energy and landfilling the biosolids. Two combined heat and power (CHP) generators were installed to use the biogas as a fuel source. The CHP units are each capable of producing 330 kW of electrical energy and 422 kW of thermal energy.

Photo credit: Focus on Energy

Program Development

REASONS FOR PROGRAM: Through the program, the state seeks to manage rising energy costs, protect the environment, control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas, and promote in-state economic development.

TIMELINE: From 2019 to 2022, RECIP will issue an RFP three times per year: January (Round 1 RFP), May (Round 2 RFP), and September (Round 3 RFP).

SOURCE OF FUNDING: Focus on Energy is funded by a partnership of 107 utilities throughout Wisconsin. Each participating utility contributes a portion of its revenue or a set amount by meter. Focus on Energy then uses the funds to provide cost-effective programs that support energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

HIGHLIGHTS: From 2010 to 2019, Focus on Energy provided \$7,993,000 in incentives for 42 biogas projects and 8 biogas feasibility studies.

Stakeholders and Key Partners

The development of Wisconsin's biogas incentive within Focus on Energy's RECIP program was championed by the American Biogas Council, a national trade association supporting the growth of the biogas industry throughout the United States. A key partner in the deployment of Wisconsin's Focus on Energy biogas incentives has been [APTIM](#), a firm that supports Focus on Energy by overseeing program design, subcontractor contract compliance, performance management, planning, marketing, stakeholder outreach, research, education, and training.

Summary of Program Results and Outcomes

From 2010 to 2019, Focus on Energy provided total incentives of \$7,993,000 to support 42 biogas projects and 8 biogas feasibility studies. Of these projects, 11 (26%) utilized CHP equipment:¹

- 6 projects were under the RECIP program:
 - 5 were installed at municipal wastewater treatment facilities
 - 1 was installed at a food/dairy products business
- 5 projects were custom energy efficiency projects:
 - 1 was installed at a food products business
 - 2 were installed at municipal wastewater treatment facilities
 - 2 were installed at commercial privately owned renewable energy generator facilities

For 27 of the 42 biogas projects, the individual project incentive amount exceeded \$100,000, with 6 projects each receiving an incentive of \$500,000. Of the total incentives paid for biogas projects and studies since 2010, \$4,783,000 (60% of all biogas incentives) supported RECIP projects; the remaining incentives supported custom efficiency projects and biogas feasibility studies.²

Lessons to Share

Customers value the opportunity to conduct feasibility studies to help them understand the costs and benefits of a proposed biogas project. More information on the feasibility study incentives, including an application form, can be found on the Focus on Energy website under the Large Energy Users Program links.³

The following are some other key considerations:

- Anaerobic process options for wastewater treatment may be the lowest life-cycle cost choice.
- Raw biogas must be properly cleaned/conditioned for its intended use.
- Co-digestion should be considered whenever feasible.

“Biogas projects can provide both energy and waste-handling benefits to the system owner. The Focus on Energy program works through market channels and trade allies whenever possible to maintain cost-effectiveness.”

***– Jolene Sheil
Portfolio Manager
Focus on Energy***

For More Information

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More CHP Policy Profiles:

<http://www.mwchptap.org/>

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¹ Wisconsin Focus on Energy, Biogas – CHP Projects Summary, dated March 13, 2019.

² Ibid.

³ www.focusonenergy.com/business/large-energy-users