



Ash Trees and More: Your Source for Urban Wood Use News

*A report from the Southeast Michigan RC&D Council's Ash Utilization Options Project.
Primary project funding is from the USDA Forest Service Wood Education & Resource Center*

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The Southeast Michigan RC&D Council has had another busy and successful year. The Council has continued to take a leadership role in helping communities affected by the emerald ash borer to find more value in their removed trees. Through educational events, research programs, demonstration grants, and strategic outreach, the Southeast Michigan RC&D has supported local efforts to create markets for this undervalued natural resource.

We have plenty of good news to announce -- new websites, new grant opportunities, and new resources to help you find more ways to use local wood. Be sure to contact us if you need more help or information!

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Wood Energy Projects Gain Steam



Council Funds Wood Energy Research and Website

The Southeast Michigan RC&D Council has three major woody biomass energy initiatives underway this year. First, the Council has sponsored a statewide study of boiler systems through grants from the USDA Forest Service and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth's Energy Office. This study, performed by CTA Architects and Engineers, produced a list of the top 35 potential wood boiler projects in each county of Michigan.

Additionally, the project created the [Michigan Wood Energy](http://michiganwoodenergy.org) website. The website includes a calculator that will allow users to enter specific information about their site's existing fossil fuel costs and energy needs. This data is then analyzed to produce an estimate of the cost of installing a wood-fueled boiler and the potential for annual fuel savings. The full boiler study report and the wood energy calculator may be found at <http://michiganwoodenergy.org>.

Oakland University and the City of Monroe Examine Wood Energy

The Council also funded wood boiler conversion engineering assessments in two local public institutions. [Oakland University](#) and the [City of Monroe's Department of Public Service](#) received \$25,000 and \$20,000 grants, respectively, to conduct feasibility studies on their existing boiler systems. Building managers at both facilities have brought together expert teams to evaluate the costs and benefits of using wood as an alternative fuel source. The use of locally-generated wood wastes for heating public buildings could provide a cheaper fuel for struggling communities, while also boosting markets for wood residue utilization. Preliminary reports from the Oakland University study show potential first year operating savings of as much as \$1.7 million by switching to a wood-fueled system.

New Wood Energy Grants Available

Finally, through a grant from the US Forest Service Wood Education and Resource Center, the Council is offering a \$65,000 grant for a local wood boiler conversion project in a public facility. Applications will be accepted until March 3, 2008. For more information, please see the complete Request for Proposals at <http://semircd.org/ash/news/BoilerDemoRFP.pdf>.

New Urban Wood Research Shows Potential for Area Businesses



What could we do with 4.7 million board feet of lumber each year?

Thanks to the a Council-sponsored study by Dr. Sam Sherrill and Dr. David MacFarlane, we now have good estimates of the annual volume, quality, and value of urban trees and other types of urban wood waste generated in Southeast Michigan. According to their report, [*Measures of Wood Resources in Lower Michigan: Wood Residues and the Saw Timber Content of Urban Forests*](#), about 7.5 million cubic yards of wood residues were generated in the area in 2005. This amount would fill 354 football fields to a depth of 10 feet. MacFarlane's portion of the work, which focused only on standing trees, found that dead urban trees from this region could produce 4.7 million board feet of lumber annually, or enough to build 362 average-sized homes.

Another Council-sponsored research project is pending publication in the Forest Products Journal, [*Sanitization of Logs Infested by Exotic Pests: Case Study of the Emerald Ash Borer \(Agrilus planipennis Fairmaire\) Treatments using Conventional Heat and Microwave*](#) (by Nzokou, Tourtellot, and

Kamdem). This study used heat-treatments to destroy emerald ash borers in ash logs. Dr. Pascal Nzokou and his research team are also currently completing research on local wood disposal yard processing and efficiency.

The RC&D Council has sponsored several other research programs to evaluate the utilization options for ash and other removed urban trees. The complete collection of RC&D-funded wood use research is available at www.semircd.org/ash/research.



The SE Michigan RC&D and Recycle Ann Arbor are proud to announce the launch of Urbanwood.org - [Southeast Michigan's Reclaimed Wood Marketplace](http://Urbanwood.org). This site is just one more way to spread the word about the beautiful and sustainable wood products that are being made in our region from reclaimed urban trees.

Urbanwood.org provides an exciting opportunity for wood users to learn more about local sawmills; see products available at Recycle Ann Arbor's ReUse Center; and discover the character, quality, and variety that can be found in local urban wood.

In partnership with the Michigan DNR and Recycle Ann Arbor, the RC&D will use a \$47,410 grant from the USDA Federal and State Marketing Improvement Program to help create more marketing and retail opportunities for southeastern Michigan's growing urban wood products industry in 2008. The grant will be used to further develop Urbanwood.org, create print materials, conduct training workshops, and explore branding strategies for local sawmills who process urban trees. This effort will largely target the expanding "green building" movement in the region.

Visit the Online Resource Library

Where should you go to find tips on marketing urban logs? Or instructions on how to build a dry kiln? Or lists of local woodworking groups? The RC&D Council has created an online resource library to assist governments, industries, and landowners in turning ash and other urban wood into valuable products. This site, which can be found at <http://semircd.org/ash/education/resources.php>, includes links to helpful guides on a variety of wood-use topics, including:

- [Emerald ash borer](#)
- [Urban wood utilization guides & success stories](#)
- [Marketing urban trees](#)
- [Urban tree inventories](#)
- [Woodlot management, timber sales, and timber values](#)
- [Measuring timber](#)
- [Timber price reports](#)
- [Wood products, processing, and handling](#)
- [Woody biomass energy](#)
- [Marketing wood products](#)
- [Wood properties](#)
- [Finding sawmills and other wood industry partners](#)
- [General forestry & wood product sites](#)
- [Local woodworking groups](#)

The resource library is a great place to look for sample wood use plans for cities, how-to guides, lists of local sawmills, and ideas for your community. Be sure to check it out!