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Renewable replacement for coal successful in test burn; first of its kind in western U.S.

***BioCoal from Renewable Fuel Technologies (RFT) helps renew forests;
works in existing fossil fuel power plants***

Monday, February 7th, 2011: Pittsburg, CA - California utility Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and power generator GWF Power Systems, L.P. today reported a successful test burn of RFT's BioCoal, a new clean, high-energy renewable fuel. Twelve hundred pounds of BioCoal were co-fired during the two-hour test at GWF's Pittsburg petcoke power plant, and was the first of its kind test in the western United States. The test generated approximately one megawatt hour of electric energy, which was delivered to PG&E without changes in operations.

The BioCoal was produced from woody debris provided by PG&E's vegetation management team using RFT's demonstration mobile torrefaction processor. BioCoal is a carbon-neutral, coal-grade fuel that is free of mercury, sulfur and toxic ash.

KEMA, a leading global authority on energy consulting, testing and certification, witnessed the test burn and verified that the power plant stayed within its normal operating range during the test. No power plant modifications were needed.

Thursday's test burn comes at a critical time both economically and politically: California legislation requires utilities and their power providers to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions, even as they increase renewable energy production. They need to evaluate emerging renewable technologies that can help them achieve these challenging goals.

"It is important that we develop renewable energy solutions that can leverage our existing power generating infrastructure," said Renewable Fuel Technologies CEO Mark Wechsler. "Power providers can use BioCoal in their existing power plants exactly as they've been using their traditional solid fossil fuels. Viable renewable fuel solutions that increase fuel diversity and supply and are simultaneously economically attractive can be an important part of California's future."

KEMA believes torrefied biomass shows good promise as a renewable fuel. Dick Bratcher, KEMA Senior Principal Consultant said, "Our studies in North America and Europe indicate that torrefied biomass can be a high-value replacement for coal or other solid fossil fuels used in generating electricity. The process being developed by RFT has the potential to create a cost-effective supply of renewable biomass that also provides other environmental benefits."

Proprietary mobile torrefaction technology

Torrefaction is a heat process that removes water and breaks down wood, producing a dry, solid material with high energy content. RFT's patent-pending process is unique in the industry: its trailer-based mobile torrefaction processors can convert woody debris at its source in the forest, safely and economically.

“Converting forest waste into a cost-effective renewable fuel serves a dual purpose,” said RFT’s Wechsler. “It enhances the health of forests across the state and creates a large new source of renewable fuel that can help the state achieve its renewable energy objectives.”

Mobile torrefaction is compatible with forest management protocols: American forests are overgrown with brush and small trees, putting them at risk of out-of-control forest fires. Removing *slash*, as forestry debris is known, is critical to restoring healthy forest conditions. Until now, slash had little commercial value, so each season; most of it was gathered up and burned — at significant expense to the state.

Renewable Fuel Technologies

RFT develops torrefaction technology that enables compact, energy self-sufficient mobile torrefaction processors which convert woody biomass into BioCoal, a clean renewable fuel that transports, stores and burns like coal.

GWF Energy

Since 1989, the GWF family of companies have constructed, owned and operated nine power plants in California with a combined generation capacity of over 500 megawatts.