

WRA Position Statement on use of waste wood in small-scale RHI boilers

In the light of uncertainty about the use of waste wood in small scale RHI biomass facilities, the Wood Recyclers' Association have decided to adopt an interim position of only recommending the use of virgin or untreated pre-consumer waste wood (including board products) for small scale RHI biomass boilers. This follows concerns from the WRA Board, the Environment Agency and OFGEM about mixed waste wood being used incorrectly and, in some cases, being 'passed off' as Grade A wood.

The WRA has found inconsistencies in wording used in guidance to boiler manufacturers and fuel suppliers, as the Environment Agency state that only clean grade A wood can be used in non-WID boilers while Local Authority guidance for boilers processing less than 3 tonnes an hour allows a mix of grades A and, in certain circumstances grade B to be used, under something known as a "B Permit". Even though the Local Authority Guidance then refers to a further description of what it means by Grade B, i.e. offcuts from board product manufacture, this needs to be explained more clearly. Whilst it seeks clarification on this guidance, the WRA is asking its members to adopt their position and to ensure that only virgin or untreated pre-consumer waste wood such as manufacturing offcuts are used in small-scale domestic and commercial non-WID compliant boilers.

This is part of the trade association's move to raise standards across the waste wood industry as they develop a Code of Practice which they will expect all members to sign up to in the future. It has already called for T6 exemptions for wood recycling to end and is now working closely with the Biomass Suppliers list, the Environment Agency, OFGEM, local authorities and others to ensure consistency on this issue.