

Principles on Responsible Biomass Electricity Development

Revised August 2024

Technology Preferences:

- MCE will prioritize resources that use a source of organic material that has been diverted from landfills, in support of organic waste diversion requirements set forth in Senate Bill 1383.
- MCE will prioritize carbon neutral resources and adaptations wherever possible.
- Selected facilities must use BACT (best available control technology) or BARCT (best available retrofit control technology) to reduce emissions to the greatest extent possible.
- Staff will seek to understand if any secondary environmental benefits with new technologies are developed at these facilities, such as creating biochar or biocarbon.
- MCE will support developers in their pursuit of expedited licensing and certification by providing relevant staff expertise and guidance.

Environmental Considerations:

- MCE will prioritize resources that support sustainable forest management and wildfire reduction strategies to minimize the fuels for uncontrolled wildfire (i.e., no fuel farms).
- MCE will prioritize procurement opportunities that proactively minimize local air quality impacts, both from the facility and from the transportation of fuel from its source to the facility. This includes prioritizing procurement from smaller facilities, as a strategy to minimize local air quality impacts.
- MCE will seek to enter into strict agreements pertaining to eligible and prohibited fuels at each facility (i.e., no propane or chemically treated wood waste when primary feedstock is low).
- MCE will ensure that biomass facilities with which it contracts will have the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and local air district permits.

Community Sensitivity:

- MCE will not procure biomass electricity from resources located in vulnerable communities defined by CalEPA's current CalEnviroScreen tool at the time of contract execution. Whenever possible, MCE will strive to procure biomass electricity from facilities that are not located in densely populated areas.
- Wherever possible, MCE will strive to avoid improving or prolonging the financial viability of polluting industries at odds with its mission through procurement of electricity produced as a byproduct of those industries. To this end, MCE will not procure electricity generated from biogas produced at concentrated animal feeding operations.
- MCE will solicit feedback from the Community Power Coalition and other partners to identify preferred locations and solicit their input and guidance on project investments.