



Independent Statistics & Analysis
U.S. Energy Information
Administration

Supporting Statement for Survey Clearance

Part B: Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

Form EIA-63C *Densified Biomass Fuel Report*

OMB No. 1905-209

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B.1. Respondent Universe

Form EIA-63C, *Densified Biomass Fuel Report*, is a mandatory monthly census survey of U.S. companies engaged in densified biomass fuel manufacturing, sales, or exporting. The information collected includes volumes produced and sold, revenues from sales, feedstock purchases and costs, inventory of products, technical characteristics of the densified biomass fuel products, and employment data. The survey frame for Form EIA-63C contains 106 respondents (85 monthly respondents and 21 annual respondents). Potential respondents are identified from U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) databases; industry/major manufacturer directories; and trade publications.

Data for this survey are collected monthly from companies with a production capacity of 10,000 tons per year or more. Limited data (Parts 1 and 2) are collected from small companies (those with production capacity under 10,000 tons per year) on an annual basis.

Analysis of 2016 and 2017 capacity information indicated that 10,000 tons per year was an appropriate cutoff threshold for reporting monthly on this survey for minimizing burden to small producers. At such level, about 90 percent of the industry's activity is covered in the monthly data collection and the number of respondents is sufficient to allow publication of aggregate data at the state or regional level. Raising the cutoff threshold for reporting monthly would not provide adequate market coverage and would result in too few respondents reporting in some regions or states to allow publication of meaningful data.

B.2. Statistical Methods

Imputation methods are applied to impute for unit and item nonresponse. Item nonresponse for missing production data is estimated using regional averages by product type weighted by production capacity. Missing cost data are estimated using regional averages by product. In 2020, the response rate for this survey was approximately 100%.

B.3. Maximizing Response Rates

To maximize response rates, EIA surveys and instructions are designed and written with clarity and conciseness. Data that are not expected to change from year-to-year or month-to-month are pre-populated on the forms such as first operational year, or installed maximum annual production capacity. Notifications are emailed early to maximize the time that respondents have to complete the surveys.

As noted in Supporting Statement A, EIA's Internet data collection system makes forms available online as soon as respondents obtain a secure ID and password. The 2020 response rate for this survey was approximately 100%. All survey responses are submitted through the online portal. Form due dates are the same each period so that respondents can schedule their completion activities.

Non-respondents for Form EIA-63C are contacted by email, telephone, and letter to request data submission, until non-response rate is achieved. Follow-up email messages citing failure to file the

required form are sent to all non-respondents. If the follow-up email messages do not result in a response, additional correspondence requesting immediate submission is sent to the supervisor of the primary contact and, if necessary, to higher-level management officials at the non-responding entity. These letters are sent from the EIA Office Director or, on rare occasions, from the Assistant Administrator or Administrator of EIA.

Respondents who file via the internet system are given the opportunity to either correct or explain unusual data during their submission. These explanations are reviewed by EIA staff and respondents are contacted if further clarification is needed. For respondents who file a paper copy of the form, email messages are sent and/or telephone calls are made to confirm corrections or clarifications of any suspected errors in data.

B.4. Test Procedures and Form Consultations

After the 60 day Federal Register notice 85 FR 76559 was published on November 30, 2020, emails were sent to the monthly survey respondents and to a list of stakeholders concerning the no change clearance with links to the proposed forms to solicit their feedback. In addition, the draft forms and instructions are posted on EIA's website for the general public. Three comments were received on form design and content. The comments were evaluated and addressed.

B.5. Statistical Consultations

For information concerning this request for OMB approval, please contact Connor Murphy, at 202-587-5982, or Connor.Murphy@eia.gov.