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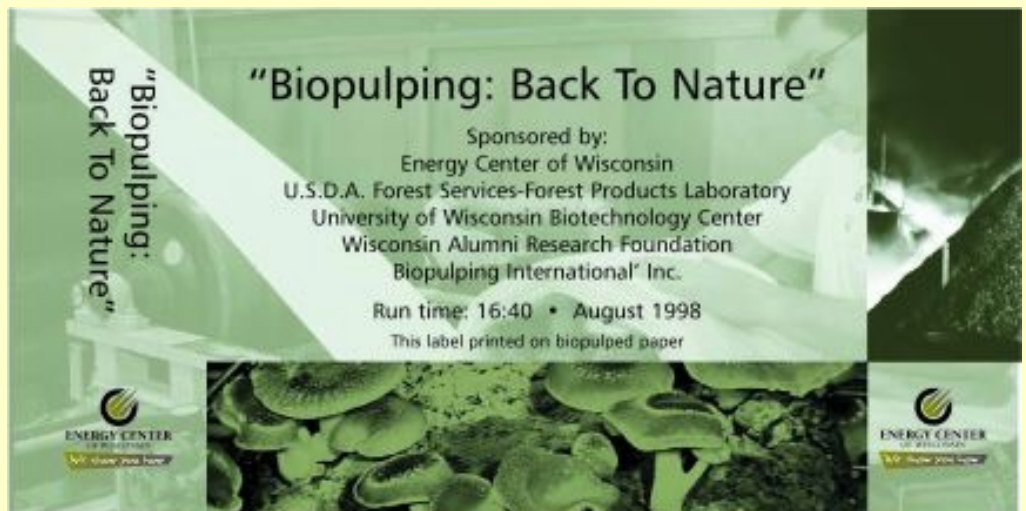
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## Biopulping: Back to Nature

Center releases a new video about an energy-saving papermaking process

By Eric Nelson

The Energy Center has released a new video about biopulping, an energy-saving technology that uses a fungus to soften wood chips prior to papermaking. Titled *Biopulping: Back to Nature*, the free video describes a recent 50-ton pulping demonstration that achieved 30 percent energy savings. It also discusses economics, productivity gains, and paper quality.



"We confirmed that the production-scale energy savings--running in a real mill--is the same as the results we got in the laboratory," says Center project manager Dave Shipley.

The USDA Forest Service Forest Products Lab, the UW-Madison Biotechnology Center, the University of Minnesota, Biopulping International, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, and the paper industry are developing the technology. The Center contributes funding.

Biopulping cuts the energy costs of mechanical pulping by making the wood chips easier to grind. "For example, if you had four refiners, you could turn one of them off and run 33 percent more chips through the other three," says Shipley.

Biopulping also yields a stronger paper that requires less kraft pulp, which is mixed in to improve strength.

"Kraft is the more expensive process," says Shipley. "It uses lots of chemicals. And 50 percent of the wood is lost. The thermo-mechanical process loses less than ten percent. So if you reduce the amount of kraft pulp in your paper products, you really are cutting down fewer trees."

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FOR MORE INFORMATION on *Biopulping: Back to Nature* contact Dave Shipley at [dshipley@ecw.org](mailto:dshipley@ecw.org).

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