



Nabegataki

Oguni Town is located roughly in the center of Kyushu, in the northern end of Kumamoto Prefecture, outside the Aso Crater, along the upper Chikugo River, bordering Oita Prefecture to the north, east and west, with Minami Oguni Town to the south. This is an agricultural and forestry area covering 137km² square meters, about 78% of which is mountainous. It is a cold district at a height between 300 and 800 meters, where it is relatively cool in summer but very cold and sometimes covered with snow in winter.

The average yearly temperature is 13°C, with high annual precipitation of 2,500mm, which provides conditions suitable for growing Oguni Sugi (Japanese cedar), in combination with the nature of the soil.

Also, the area is situated in the Aso Volcanic Zone, with hot-spring health resorts such as Tsuetate and Waita hot springs. Particularly in Waita hot spring, bursts of steam can be seen everywhere in the village and the entire area is covered by steam, which indicates that the area is blessed with abundant resources.

Development of Regional Energy Generation Model

The Wood Station Project started in March 2015 with the copy of “earn your evening drinks with a pickup truck and chainsaw.” The forest owners and volunteers ship the waste wood materials and woods thinned from the forest to the Wood Station, in exchange of which the shippers receive regional currency “Mori Ken” (forest coupon). This coupon can be used at the member stores in the town. This of course can cover the costs for their evening drinks. Collected materials are used as fuels for woody (firewood) biomass boilers installed in hot spring facilities in the town in February 2016. The use of heavy oil has been reduced to one-fourteenth after the introduction of the boilers (April 2016) compared with the consumption before the introduction (April 2015).

When the Kumamoto Earthquake hit in 2016, the town opened the hot springs heated with reserved firewood for free, which was appreciated by many evacuees.



↑Wood Station Project

↓Woody (firewood) biomass boiler



Development of Low Carbon Agriculture and Forestry Reactivation Model

Each household in the hot spring resort areas with abundant geothermal resources has a drying shed using geothermal heat. Since this drying shed is heated only with steam heat, it can be used for the drying of various things including vegetables and laundry. Utilizing the mechanism of the shed, the town has developed geothermal wood drying facilities. These facilities have a good reputation for their environmental impact and efficiency as they can finish the drying in about a week without requiring the use of fossil fuels. Not only that, they also maintain the original color and gloss of woods and enhance the woods' aroma.

The wood drying facility using geothermal steam can be found only in this area. The 14 facilities developed under cooperation between the town government, forestry association and timber mills are now operating almost every day.



Geothermal lumber drying facility

Development of Emissions Reduction by the Community Model

In an effort to reduce CO₂ emissions from transport, the town will promote the use of shared-taxis and the spread of EVs. Specifically, it will introduce EVs for official vehicles and shared-taxis as appropriate for awareness-raising and build a user-friendly transport system with a reservation-based traffic control system using ICT technology in order to increase the number of public transport users.

Also, it will establish a system to measure CO₂ emissions from electricity, gas and fuel village by village, taking advantage of community activities in intermountain region. Based on the measurement, it will run a contest in CO₂ emissions reduction to boost the activities.



Fit EV (public vehicle)