

Welsh plant plans protest shut-down

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Comment (1)

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A WELSH chipboard factory is to cease production for two hours as part of a Europe-wide protest against subsidies for biomass power stations.

The 600 workers at the Kronospan plant at Chirk, near Wrexham, will halt production between 11am and 1pm today in a co-ordinated mass protest by wood panel plants across Europe.

Wood panel industry leaders say that timber harnessed for biomass energy at the end of its life is a sound proposition, but subsidies encourage electricity generators to burn virgin wood, raising CO2 emissions.

According to a United Nations report the burning of such wood in biomass plants means that in Europe alone, there will be a shortage of up to 400m cubic metres of timber by the year 2020.

Gavin Adkins, director of Kronospan, said: "Paying subsidies to burn virgin timber rather than manufacture with it, damages wealth creation, the economy and the environment. It's pushing up prices, creating a shortage in raw material and inevitably threatens millions of jobs."

Kronospan's symbolic shutdown supports the European Panel Federation's Day of Action, which will bring the European industry to a standstill on October 29.

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