News Release
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NEW REPORT EXPLORES CONVERSION OF WASTE INTO ENERGY VIA EMERGING GASIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Authors Identify Challenges and Opportunities for Investors, Municipalities

WASHINGTON (September 12, 2013) – A new report evaluates how an emerging set of technologies that could potentially convert large-scale municipal solid waste into energy could fit into waste management planning in North America. The new technologies are known collectively as “gasification” because they first convert waste into a synthesis gas or “syngas,” which can be used to create a range of energy and fuel products.

Although full-scale commercial gasification facilities are not yet in place in the United States, these technologies are receiving growing interest from policymakers and entrepreneurs because of the versatility of their energy outputs, which include steam, electricity, ethanol, and diesel along with chemical intermediates.

“Despite rapid increases in recycling in recent years, a significant amount of energy-rich waste still goes to landfill in this country,” said Harvey Gershman, president of Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc. “Gasification is one of a growing number of exciting new technologies under development that may one day harness the potential of waste as an abundant source of domestic energy.”

According to the report, which was written with municipalities, investors and waste managers in mind, there are currently 21 demonstration facilities being operated in the United States and another 17 commercial-scale facilities under development. Report authors Gershman, Brickner & Bratton, Inc. point out that energy-rich non-recycled plastics are an attractive feedstock for gasification processes.

“Plastics are a valuable resource, and we need to recycle them whenever it makes sense to do so,” said Steve Russell, vice president of plastics for the American Chemistry Council. “But not all plastics can be recycled in a way that’s economically and environmentally efficient. Emerging technologies that can convert waste into electricity, higher value fuels and chemicals can help us capture plastics’ high-energy value and put it to work to help power communities across America.

The report, “Gasification of Non-Recycled Plastics from Municipal Solid Waste in the United States” offers an overview of gasification technologies, feedstock flexibility, outputs and

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economics, licensing companies, experience with gasification technologies, opportunities and barriers to commercialization, and the potential role of gasification in integrated waste management systems.

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