



FROM WASTE TO RESOURCE: UNLOCKING ALTERNATIVE FUELS IN CEMENT MANUFACTURING

Background

Cement plants typically run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They use temperatures as high as 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit to convert limestone and other minerals into the active ingredient in cement — clinker. Generating and maintaining kilns at the required high temperatures involves the combustion of significant quantities of fuel.

Since cement kilns operate at high temperatures and long residence times, they are efficient at combusting various alternative fuels. Alternative fuels include recovered non-hazardous materials with sufficient energy value to supplement traditional fossil fuels in cement manufacturing. Cement kilns can safely and effectively use diverse fuel types, reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuels and diverting materials from landfills.

Importantly, cement manufacturing uses alternative fuels in a “co-processing” system that recovers energy while incorporating material components into the final product, distinguishing it from traditional waste disposal or incineration.



The Problem

A complicated regulatory framework has limited the overall use of alternative fuels to about 17 percent of the total fuel used by U.S. cement manufacturers, well below the rate of adoption in Europe. This is due to a complex regulatory framework under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and EPA’s Non-Hazardous Secondary Materials (NHSM) regulations that make it difficult to qualify certain recovered materials as non-waste fuels. The current process requires complex, technical, material-specific determinations that create regulatory uncertainty and compliance risk for manufacturers.

Representative Jay Obernolte (R-CA) has introduced the Reforming Cement Manufacturing for Enhanced Material Efficiency and New Technology Act (ReCement Act) to encourage the use of domestic, alternative fuels in cement manufacturing. The ReCement Act amends RCRA to simplify when certain recovered non-hazardous materials are non-waste fuels (not “discarded” solid waste) when combusted as an ingredient or fuel in the manufacture of cement or clinker.

Under the ReCement Act, all cement plants will remain subject to Clean Air Act standards to protect public health and welfare. The ReCement Act would improve regulatory certainty, support domestic manufacturing, expand the use of alternative fuels, and reduce landfill disposal while maintaining existing environmental protections.

ACA Asks

The cement industry encourages Congress to:

- **Support targeted RCRA reforms** that expand the use of alternative fuels while maintaining existing environmental protections by cosponsoring Representative Obernolte’s ReCement Act.



Take Action

Support the **ReCement Act**

For more information, please contact Josh Reiner at jreiner@cement.org