

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	18-MISC-03
Project Title:	Renewable Energy for Agriculture Program
TN #:	222589
Document Title:	rick vargas Comments Boiler Economizer Replacement
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	rick vargas
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	2/16/2018 12:24:16 PM
Docketed Date:	2/16/2018

Comment Received From: rick vargas

Submitted On: 2/16/2018

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Boiler Economizer Replacement

For years our local utilities provided assistance in the form of energy rebates for replacement of equipment that had exceeded its useful life or was beyond repair. A few years ago, the CPUC discouraged this practice because they feared manipulation. Unfortunately, they failed to consider that a properly measured program leaves no room for misrepresentation. This decision has since increased GHG emissions in California for all facilities with aging boiler economizers. Large boilers with pre-2000 era economizers can run at 84-85% efficiency. However, in the tomato industry they have a useful life of 10 years. After 10 years, the internals begin to fail. Eventually, we are forced to bypass the entire economizer, thus reducing the boiler efficiency to 79%. Replacing the economizer on a 125,000 lb/hr boiler costs \$500,000, the efficiency gain of 6% results in a 17 year payback..7 years beyond the economizers useful life. Thus, it makes no economic sense to replace failed economizers, unless there is assistance thru public programs such as this. Note that these are real, measurable reductions in GHG emissions.