

Excess heat recovery legislation passes Assembly with industry support

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A bill that would classify excess heat produced by manufacturing processes as a renewable resource recently passed the state Assembly with broad support from some of Wisconsin's biggest industries.

Electric utilities and retail electric cooperatives are currently held to "renewable portfolio standards," which require a certain percentage of the electricity they sell to retail customers to come from renewable resources.

These groups can use renewable resource credits — which they can create themselves or buy from others — to meet the required percentage. These RRCs are created when electricity is produced from a renewable resource like solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and others.

Utilities and co-ops, as well as their customers and members, can also get RRCs based on the use of renewable resources, to the degree that their use displaces electricity derived from conventional resources.

The bill, which passed the Senate earlier this year, would place waste heat in the same category as wind and solar with respect to the RRC program. It goes now to Gov. Scott Walker for approval.

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