

## **Tsukigatani Onsen Area**

“Onsen” is usually translated as “hot spring,” but natural springs are not always hot. Since there is no local geothermal activity, springs in Kamikatsu are cold and the baths at Tsukigatani Onsen must be heated even though the water flows from natural springs. The staff uses two wood chip boilers to heat the water as well as to warm the guest rooms. This biomass energy is not only better for the environment than fossil fuels due to reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but is also cheaper. The boilers use the town’s abundant wood supply, including waste wood from forest thinning, and provide an effective way to use excess local resources.

The baths at Tsukigatani Onsen are open for day use and to overnight guests. The area has many attractions, including a campsite, Irodori Yama, and Katsuura River. A company that runs children’s programs and glamping operates the campsite, and it has facilities for indoor and outdoor activities for guests of all ages.