

Good News from NEBTWG

May 22, 2012

Companies, governments, and communities around the Northeast are making progress on biomass heating and combined heat and power (CHP) programs and projects, and we've collected a sample to share in this month's "Good News from NEBTWG!"

Below, you'll see how newsworthy events and stories are demonstrating the region's development of renewable biomass heating systems. If you have a story to contribute, please send the update to info@nebioheat.org.

MD: New Stove Rebate Program in Maryland

The Alliance for Green Heat and Maryland legislators worked with the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA), to start a rebate program for wood and pellet stoves. After a 2-year campaign, MEA agreed to put \$50,000 towards a pilot program and start it later in 2012. The program will give up to \$500 for the cleanest wood or pellet stoves. The Alliance is urging MEA to limit the wood stove rebate to rural families who heat with oil, propane or electricity. [More information >>](#)

NY: Biomass Recognized for Low Income Heating Benefits

The New York Low Income Forum on Energy conference invited a biomass speaker to their annual conference for the first time, indicating a growing interest and awareness that biomass is an effective fuel for low income heating. NEBTWG asked the Alliance for Green Heat to give that presentation and they are doing it in conjunction with the NY Biomass Energy Association. [More information >>](#)

VT: Final Funding in Place for Montpelier District Heating Project

Vermont's Clean Energy Development fund presented the state capital's mayor with a \$1.25 million check for a downtown district heating project. The facility is financed with various local, state, and federal sources and will heat private, municipal, and state buildings with clean, renewable energy. [More information >>](#)

MA: Biomass Fuels to Help Heat Massachusetts Transit Center

The new John W. Oliver Transit Center in Boston will soon become the nation's first net-zero transit center thanks to the installation of a new wood pellet boiler for the building's heating demands. The biomass thermal boiler will work in conjunction with both solar and geothermal technologies to achieve a carbon-neutral facility. [More information >>](#)

ME: Maine-based Company Supplying Schools with Biomass Thermal Appliances

Pelletco LLC of Orono, ME will begin providing school districts in the Northeast with the installation and maintenance of thermal heating systems at no cost. The company will own the individual units while selling its efficient biomass fuels and metered heat to schools at prices much lower than fossil fuels. [More information >>](#)

PA: Philadelphia Hosting Conference on CHP for College Campuses

The Pennsylvania Environmental Resource Consortium will co-host a conference outlining the benefits that combined heat and power (CHP) can have for college and university campuses in Philadelphia on June 6. Biomass-fueled CHP will be featured. [More information >>](#)

Another important upcoming event is the Pennsylvania Biomass Energy Association's Fall Conference in Harrisburg, PA on October 2-3. [More information >>](#)

NH: New Hampshire Legislature Including Biomass Thermal into its RPS

As this "NEBTWG Good News" goes to press, the NH Legislature is on the verge of adding a thermal component to the state's renewable portfolio standard (RPS). The provision will provide renewable energy certificates (RECs) for the "useful thermal energy" from biomass, solar and geothermal technologies. The certificates will be worth up to \$25 per megawatt-hour (MWH) of useful thermal energy output. The provision mandates roughly 22,000 MWH of thermal RECs in 2013, increasing by that amount each year through 2025. The total value in incentives to thermal projects will be over \$47 million, assuming all RECs sell at the maximum value of \$25/MWH.

What is the significance of this? NH will be the first state in the country to mandate RPS incentive provisions for stand-alone thermal renewable systems such as biomass heat that are equivalent in value to those that exist for renewable electric technologies. It is hoped that by taking the lead, and showing other states how electric RPS programs can be modified to include thermal, that other states will follow this lead. There are 32 states that have RPS programs.

As an example of the significance of the proposed thermal provision, a 1 MMBTU pellet or chip boiler (approx. 300 kw), operating 2,000 hours a year at load, will produce 600 MWH of useful thermal energy. Assuming these RECs sell at \$20/MWH, the owner of the boiler will have RECs worth \$12,000 to sell each year to a utility that is obligated by law to purchase them. This revenue stream, which may continue annually through 2025, will pay down the capital cost and greatly reduce the ROI payback. High capital cost and long ROI remains the single greatest hurdle to more widespread adoption of biomass heating.

Stay tuned for next month's "Good News" to find out if the provision survived late session House/Senate negotiations. For more information, contact Charlie Niebling at New England Wood Pellet, cniebling@pelletheat.com.

Upcoming Events:

This month's Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) webinar will focus on the technical status, cost effectiveness, market barriers, and greenhouse gas benefits associated with four technologies for residential and commercial building applications - solar water and space heating, high efficiency air- and ground-source heat pumps, clean and high efficiency wood pellet and chip boilers, and biodiesel blended with fuel oil. [Register here for the free event >>](#)

The webinar will report on the findings from a recent study: Massachusetts Renewable Heating and Cooling: Opportunities and Impacts Study, which was prepared by Meister Consultants Group for the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources and Massachusetts Clean Energy Center.

Speakers:

- Bram Claeys, Renewable Energy Policy Director, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
- Christie Howe, Project Manager, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
- Neil Veilleux, Senior Consultant, Meister Consultants Group

Title: CESA Member and RPS Collaborative Webinar: Renewable Thermal Technologies

Date: May 30, 2012

Time: 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET

Registration: [Free, here >>](#)

Again, thank you for your support. Together, we are advancing biomass heating in the Northeast!

About the Northeast Biomass Thermal Working Group

The Northeast Biomass Thermal Working Group (NEBTWG) is a coalition of biomass thermal advocates committed to working together to advance the use of biomass for heating and CHP (combined heat and power) in the northeastern United States. Learn more at www.nebioheat.org.