

NRBP Monthly Report March 6, 2002

Upcoming Meetings, Workshops and Conferences

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) are hosting a renewable diesel workshop March 18, 2002 in Albany, New York. For more information contact:

<http://www.nyserda.org/events.html>

The Biomass Energy Resource Center will hold a board of Directors meeting March 15, 2002. Contact Tim Maker at (802) 223-7770.

Vermont will hold a biomass working group meeting (Vermont Partners) on Tuesday March 19, 2002, in Montpelier. Contact Paul Frederick at paul.frederick@state.vt.us.

The Delaware Bioenergy Consortium will meet Tuesday May 7, 2002, in Dover Delaware. Contact Dot Abbott-Donnelly at dotad@udel.edu.

NRBP Makes Delaware Presentation

The NRBP presented testimony before the technical committee of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission on February 19, 2002 in Dover. The Commission has been charged with review of a current state law limiting the use of many biomass feedstocks for energy production. Enacted in 2000, Senate Bill 280 revised the Delaware code to prohibit siting of an incinerator within three miles of a school or residence. The law further defined gasification as incineration and prohibited its use as a technology to generate power. A consequence of the legislation was the virtual elimination of opportunities for biomass power generation except with dedicated energy crops. A provision in the law provided that the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission review the law and report back to the legislature. The NRBP was invited by the Commission's technical committee to provide testimony on biopower applications in other states, and in particular to comment on the role of biomass power generation as a tool to manage poultry litter. At the meeting the technical committee voted 4 to 1 to recommend that the nutrient management commission recommend that the law be revised to provide for wider application of biomass fuels and technologies including poultry litter.

NRBP Participates in National Water Research Institute Workshop

The NRBP was an invited participant in a workshop hosted by the National Water Research Institute on the Life Cycle Environmental Impacts Associated with Different Fuel Options. The NRBP's director was one of 35 experts invited to participate in a Nominal Group Technique pioneered by the Institute for identifying, prioritizing, and developing approaches that address critical issues. The Institute convened the experts to identify the most important issues that needed to be addressed in a comprehensive assessment of life-cycle environmental impacts

associated with alternative fuel options. According to the Institute, in many cases policy decisions are made without the benefit of the full understanding of the integration and complexity of the multimedia nature of an environmental problem as well as the science and engineering parameters involved. The workshop was convened in part due to issues surrounding MTBE in drinking water and the potential for ethanol to be used as a replacement. The workshop was held in cooperation with Clarkson University, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and the USEPA - Office of Research and Development. The workshop report (NWRI-02-01) is available from the National Water Research Institute. Contact:

National Water Research Institute
10500 Ellis Avenue
P.O. Box 20865
Fountain Valley, CA 92728-0865

NRBP Presents Testimony On Biofuels Before Pennsylvania State Legislators

The NRBP was invited to present [testimony](#) to the Task Force on 21 Century Energy Policy for Pennsylvania. The task force was established by the State legislature to evaluate possible courses of action for the State to reduce imported petroleum use. The March 6, 2002, hearing in York, Pennsylvania invited testimony of the role of biofuels in Pennsylvania. In addition to the NRBP's testimony the Task force heard from representatives from biodiesel manufacturers, the Pennsylvania Corn Growers, and Robert Barkanic Deputy Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

The NRBP's testimony addressed three broad areas where the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania could influence use and production of biofuels, ethanol and biodiesel, with the goal of reducing imported petroleum:

- Support for the Department of Agriculture (the NRBP's host organization) to lead bioproduct and bioenergy efforts in the Commonwealth;
- Establishment of tax incentives to encourage producers to invest in biofuel production; and
- Encouraging biofuel use through supporting state purchases.

Both the NRBP and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection called for establishment of a bioenergy working group in the state, and development of state based production of biofuels, including ethanol from cellulosic feedstocks. House Member Ellen Bard asked the NRBP to provide additional information on what other states have provided as tax incentives, any conflict between federal and state incentives, and the economic factors that impact success of ethanol plants. The NRBP is preparing the information.

Massachusetts Adopts Changes Beneficial to Biomass in RPS Regulations

Several members of the Massachusetts Biomass Working Group teamed to draft a joint response to the Commonwealth's draft renewable portfolio standards (RPS) regulations. Many in the

working group, convened by the Division of Energy Resources for the NRBP, felt the draft regulations were too restrictive regarding definition of eligible fuels and technology. The Massachusetts working group has been the single most important tool in convening biomass industry stakeholders in the Commonwealth. Through their association on the working group, industry stakeholders were, for the first time, able to mount a coordinated effort in support of biomass fuels and technology. Based on comments from working group members the definition of “eligible wood” was broadened in the final regulations. In addition DOER agreed with industry stakeholders that the final rule should adopt a comprehensive technology review inherent in emission permitting rather than prescribe eligible combustion technologies that would qualify as allowable new renewable generation technologies. To view the full comments by industry stakeholders and DOER responses see www.state.ma.us.doer.

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