

**NRBP Update
December 5, 2002**

Upcoming Meetings, Workshops, and Conferences

Massachusetts Biomass Working Group Meeting, December 10, 2002.
Contact Howard Bernstein (howard.bernstein@state.ma.us)

Pennsylvania Biomass Working Group, Co-Firing Subcommittee, December 12, 2002.
Contact Joseph Sherrick (josherrick@state.pa.us)

Maryland Biomass Working Group Meeting December 12, 2002, Annapolis, MD.
Contact Charles Miller (cmiller@energy.state.md.us)

New Hampshire Bio-oil Meeting December 13, 2002, Holderness, NH.
Contact Joe Broyles (jbroyle@gov.state.nh.us)

Vermont Partners Meeting, December 19, 2002, Burlington, VT.
Contact Paul Frederick (pfrederick@fpr.anr.state.vt.us)

Delaware Biomass Consortium Meeting, January 7, 2003 in Dover, DE
Contact Dot Abbott-Donnelly (Dotad@udel.edu)

Renewable Energy for Homes Farms and Schools, January 31, 2003, Seabrook, New Jersey.
Contact Athena Sarafides (Athena.Sarafides@dep.state.nj.us)

NRBP Steering Committee Meeting, February 4-6, 2003, Gardner, MA.
Contact Rick Handley (nrbp@ssso.org)

Mount Wachusett Community College Dedicates Biomass Power Plant

After many years of planning, Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner, Massachusetts, officially opened its new biomass power plant on December 2, 2002. The College received a one-million-dollar award from the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), which was administered by the NRBP. The plant features state-of-the-art technology, including an 8 million BTU wood-chip boiler, a core separator that represents the best available control technology for particulate emission control, and a computerized energy management system. According to College President Daniel M. Asquino, "This project represents the College's efforts to effectively respond to the rising and disproportionate cost of energy in the Northeast." He also stated, "This initiative clearly illustrates the College's commitment to address the need for increased energy production in consort with environmental protection."

The genesis for this project dates back to 1995, when the Massachusetts Legislature established the Special Commission on Forest Management Practices. The Commission held public hearings in the fall of 1995 and the winter of 1996. In the findings of the Special Commission's final report to the legislature, it stated, "Effective forest management is one tool for diversifying

the wildlife habitat and maintaining a healthy and sustainable forest, and is also an essential tool for increasing the long-term economic value of the forest.” The Commission also concluded that biomass energy was an essential ingredient in support of effective forest management, and recommended that “a wood energy pilot project be conducted at Mount Wachusett Community College.”

The forest resources in Massachusetts are underutilized, with less than 30% of the annual growth harvested each year. Massachusetts’ forests are growing at a rate of five million tons per year, enough biomass resource to fuel 5,000 power plants like the one at Mount Wachusett. As the home of the *Robert D. Wetmore Center for Innovation in Design, Technology and Resource Development* and the *Forest and Wood Products Institute*, the College is well positioned to demonstrate the role of biomass as a sustainable, renewable energy source addressing the current concerns of air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and forest management practices. The new plant dedication was attended by 100 invited guests, including state representatives and U. S. Representative John Olver.

Connecticut Planning Biodiesel Workshop

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, host organization for the NRBP in Connecticut, is planning a workshop on producing biodiesel from waste fats, oils, and greases (FOG). Connecticut generates thousands of tons of waste fats, oils, and greases each year. This workshop will discuss the potential for the manufacture and use of waste FOG for the production of biodiesel in Connecticut. The workshop will also discuss regulations and standards, technologies to produce biodiesel, feedstock issues such as collection and competing uses, the economics of production, and biodiesel markets. The NRBP hopes that the workshop, tentatively set for early March 2003, will attract attendees from throughout southern New England.

Oil & Energy (and Biodiesel)

The November issue of *Oil & Energy*, the trade publication of the New England Fuel Institute, has as its lead story an article on biodiesel field testing for home heating. The article, “Heating Oil Goes Green,” features the Abbott & Mills Oil Company of Newburgh, NY, and its field study of 100 homes in the Hudson River valley, just north of New York City, which are using B20 for home heating. The project is being funded jointly by the New York State Energy Research Authority (NYSERDA), Brookhaven National Laboratory, and the NRBP, through its grant to NYSERDA. The NRBP is also supporting studies of commercial heating with biodiesel in Warwick, Rhode Island, also through the NRBP’s State Grant Program.

Biofuel Use Continues to Grow in the Northeast

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) recently reported that it has used approximately 91,000 gallons of B-20 fuel. This fuel is being used in all diesel-powered equipment at three locations: Putnam Maintenance & Repair Facility, Trumbull, and Milford. DOT receives CMAQ funds to cover the price differential of the B-20 at the Milford & Trumbull Facilities. Still in the planning stage is the possibility of establishing one or two E-85 (ethanol) fueling stations at DOT locations.

The first station to sell biodiesel has opened in the city of Chelsea, Massachusetts, selling biodiesel from World Energy, also of Chelsea. One of World Energy's major in-state customers is the University of Massachusetts - Amherst, which began switching from standard diesel to biodiesel for its fleet of over 300 vehicles in September 2001, and which blends standard and neat biodiesel on a seasonal basis.

Through the DOE Clean Cities Program, an award was made to NOCO Energy to build three biofuel refueling stations in Western New York.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) recently announced it has begun using B20, a mixture of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent petroleum diesel, in 104 diesel-powered vehicles at three of its southeastern maintenance facilities. The PTC chose the use of this new alternative to make the turnpike more environmentally friendly and to do their part to economically benefit farmers. Additionally, the PTC plans to use E85 fuel, a mixture of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent standard gasoline, in its 83 Ford Taurus Flex-Fuel vehicles once the fuel is made available in the state.