



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending December 19, 2008

State law assigns four core duties to the State Planning Office that include: 1) conducting continuing economic analysis, including economic forecasting, 2) coordinating the development of the State's economy and energy resources with the conservation of its natural resources; 3) providing technical assistance to towns and regions; and 4) providing technical assistance to the Governor and Legislature by undertaking special studies and plans and preparing policy alternatives.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating Fuel Prices Inch Down. The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) conducted the weekly oil survey and has found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.43 per gallon** falling \$.04 since last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$1.90 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$3.60 per gallon was found in the Western region. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$47.28. The statewide kerosene price average is \$2.91 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.87 per gallon which is \$0.08 higher than last week. The average price for propane represents the price per gallon for a 600-800 gallon domestic heating application. The next scheduled survey will be on Monday December 22, 2008. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov .**

THE MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE



VolunteerFare released. The Maine Commission for Community Service released its newsletter, *VolunteerFare*, this week. *VolunteerFare* aims to provide volunteer program managers, sponsors, and funders with a forum for exchanging news, technical information, best practices, recommendations on useful resources and more. In this issue topics included tips for using VolunteerMaine.org, information about Martin Luther King Day, National Mentoring Month, and Maine's AmeriCorps * VISTA project. To read the newsletter in its entirety or subscribe please visit

<http://www.volunteermaine.org/MVF/issue.php?date=2008-12-01> .

CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 207.287.8933 or rochelle.runge@maine.gov .

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Electronics Recycling Drop-off at the Augusta Civic Center. The United Way of Kennebec Valley and eWaste Recycling Solutions are partnering to respond to the community's need for recycling consumer electronic devices by hosting a drop off on Saturday, December 20th. There is no charge for Maine residents; however the United Way of Kennebec Valley will be accepting contributions during the event. This is a great opportunity to responsibly dispose of obsolete monitors, televisions, computers, printers, copiers, fax machines and cell phones. Bring your items to the drop-off spot located in the lower parking area between the hours of 9am and 3pm. CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5759 or George.MacDonald@maine.gov .



Posters and Coasters. The Maine Recycles Campaign is working on colorful new posters to add to its series. One fun example is the "Bikers Recycle" poster featuring a member of the Big Moose Harley staff about to toss his can in the recycle bin. The campaign is enlisting the help of Maine beverage distributors to pass out posters and 50,000 coasters throughout Maine. To learn more about the Maine Recycles Campaign, go to www.maine.gov.

CONTACT: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or jetta.antonakos@maine.gov .



MAINE COASTAL PROGRAM

New Website Lunched to Support the Ocean Energy Task Force. Governor Baldacci established the Ocean Energy Task force to recommend a strategy to increase wind energy generation from coastal waters. Maine's vast renewable ocean energy potential holds enormous promise to address the state's energy needs. The task force's first report will be in April 2009. You can find this report, meeting agendas and minutes, a list of members, and other information at

<http://www.maine.gov/spo/specialprojects/OETF/index.htm>. **CONTACT: Todd Burrowes at 287-1496 or todd.burrowes@maine.gov .**

Methodology for identifying scenic viewpoints of state or national significance in the coastal area. As required by Title 35-A MRSA §3457, the State Planning Office is initiating rule-making to establish the methodology for identifying scenic viewpoints of state or national significance in coastal areas that are publicly owned or to which there is public access. State wind power laws require consideration of the potential effect of a large-scale wind power project on "scenic resources of state or national significance," including scenic viewpoints that are identified as having statewide or national significance in a scenic inventory developed in accordance with this technical rule. The proposed rule incorporates the Scenic Assessment Handbook (SPO, 2008) as its methodology. The rule itself does not identify scenic viewpoints, but the method for doing so, which calls for public involvement in the preparation and review of a scenic inventory. SPO is accepting public comments on this proposed rule. Written comments may be submitted to Lorraine Lessard, State Planning Office, 38 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333, on or before 5 P.M., January 26, 2009. A copy of the proposed rule and handbook is available on-line at:

<http://www.maine.gov/spo/rightcolumn/wind/index.htm>. **CONTACT: Todd Burrowes at 287-1496 or todd.burrowes@maine.gov .**

POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Citizen-initiated rule-making. Two hundred and fifty-three (253) citizens of Alton and Hudson petitioned the State Planning Office to initiate rule-making under 5 MRSA §8055 to require the Office to accept public comments when certain changes are proposed to an operating services agreement between the State and its contracted operator of a state-owned solid waste disposal facility. A proposed rule lays out the requirements for a public hearing. A rule-making public hearing is scheduled for Friday, January 9 at the University of Maine, Jewett Hall Auditorium at University Drive

in Augusta beginning at 1:00 p.m. Persons unable to attend the public hearing may submit comments in writing (no e-mail) to Rhonda Carl at State Planning Office 38 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 before 4:00 pm on January 20, 2009. A copy of the proposed rule is available on-line at <http://www.maine.gov/spo/rightcolumn/sporules.htm>. CONTACT: Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov