



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending February 27, 2009

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 Drop. 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 **\$2.20 per gallon** dropping \$.09 since last week. It is important to note that the price for heating oil is a statewide average and that prices in a given geographic region of the state may be considerably higher or lower than the statewide average. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$1.68 per gallon was found in the Southwestern & Western regions. The high-end price of \$2.45 per gallon was found in the Eastern, Western & Northern regions.

At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$34.45 down more than five dollars from last week. The statewide kerosene price average is \$2.66 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.92 per gallon which is \$.05 higher than last week. The average price for propane represents the price per gallon for a 600-800 gallon domestic heating application. February's average natural gas price for the state is \$1.40 per therm for residential customers. That translates into \$14 per million btu's of energy for natural gas, compared with \$16.61 per MMBTU for heating oil and \$31 per MMBTU for propane at this week's price. The next scheduled survey will be on Monday March 2, 2009. CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov .

THE MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Maine Commission for Community Service Releases Annual Report. This years report includes highlights from the volunteer sector including Maine's AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve, and AmeriCorps VISTA programs. Also featured, are the special projects the Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS) oversees, including The Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism, The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards, and Martin Luther King Day of Service projects.

The report identifies the enormous impact volunteerism has on the State. Maine has 356,000 volunteers who contribute more than \$868 million annually to the States economy. Also, Maine ranks well above the national average in numbers of citizens who volunteer. The VolunteerMaine.org website, which is maintained by MCCS and its partners, has seen a dramatic increase in site traffic and in the number of volunteers referred to agencies to fill volunteer positions. To read the many accomplishments of 2008 please visit our [website](#) to download the full report. Printed copies are available by request. **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or rochelle.runge@maine.gov.**

COASTAL PROGRAM

The Maine Coastal Program announces the availability of funds for Shore and Harbor Planning grants. Funds are provided through the state's NOAA Coastal Program Grant and the Shore and Harbor Fund managed by the Maine Department of Conservation, Submerged Lands Program. Funds may be used for harbor planning, including harbor management plans, ordinances, and mooring plans; as well as, planning studies for public and working access, planning and designing of harbor improvements, developing management plans for municipal facilities in harbors and waterfronts that border upon and may include state-owned submerged lands.

Shore and harbor grants are available to municipalities in the State's designated coastal zone, which includes all towns with tidal waters, to the head of tide on tidal rivers. Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis, based on the results of a project scoring and selection process. Grant applications are due by the close of business on Monday, April 6, 2009. Individual grants may not exceed \$20,000. **CONTACT: Jim Connors at 287-8938 or jim.connors@Maine.gov .**

LAND FOR MAINE'S FUTURE

LMR releases it's [2009 Biennial Progress Report](#). Program director, Tim Glidden presented LMF's biennial progress report to the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry on February 20th. Over the past two years, LMF assisted in the conservation of more than 54,000 acres of Maine's best conservation, recreation and farmlands bringing the total acreage of lands conserved in Maine with LMF support to 498,000. Fifty six transactions were completed including seven farms, eight water access sites, and three working waterfront facilities along with dozens of recreation and conservation projects. Projects were completed in 14 counties. While 67 projects are still underway with the proceeds of past bonds, the program has committed virtually all available conservation and farm funds. The Legislature is currently considering several proposals for a new LMF bond package. **CONTACT: Tim Glidden at 287-1670 or tim.glidden@maine.gov .**