

WOODPELLETS.COM COMMENDS PATRICK ADMINISTRATION FOR GROUNDBREAKING BIOMASS SUSTAINABILITY STUDY

Report shows that biomass resources used for heat and cogeneration reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time; using biomass resources for electrical power generation is actually counterproductive and compares unfavorably with coal.

Goffstown, NH – WoodPellets.com, the nation's leading independent distributor and direct-to-consumer provider of wood pellet heating fuel, applauds the findings of a [six-month study](#) commissioned by the [Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources](#) and conducted by the [Manomet Center for Conservation Science](#). This study concluded that “the use of biomass for heating and combined heat and power (CHP) facilities would result in a **25 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions** in 2050 relative to oil, but biomass-fired electricity would result in a 3 percent increase in emissions over coal-fired electricity in 2050.

“This study offers further evidence that using renewable biomass to generate heat is the cleanest, most efficient use of our biomass resources. Homeowners have a tremendous opportunity to decrease greenhouse gas emissions, to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and to save on their heating costs by using wood pellets for heating,” said WoodPellets.com CEO Jon Strimling. ***“In a world where BP’s recent oil spill has made us only too aware of the environmental hazards of oil, consumers and businesses can switch to a safe, domestically produced alternative today. From high efficiency heating appliances to sustainably harvested fuel and convenient fuel delivery systems, all the pieces are in place for the renewable heating revolution. We invite every citizen to join us in this movement.”***

Thermal energy, essentially heat, accounts for roughly one-third of the total energy used in the US. Europe has proven that biomass can replace oil heat and displace carbon emissions. To fully confront our nation’s energy crisis and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a comprehensive policy must address the thermal sector, not only the electric and transportation sectors. ***“Now what we need is a Renewable Thermal Standard to tackle the heating sector,”*** proposed Strimling. ***“Investing in the thermal energy sector will not only slash our greenhouse gas emissions, it will also lower energy costs for homeowners and businesses.”*** Consumers who switch from heating oil to wood pellet fuel can [save hundreds of dollars in annual energy costs](#).ⁱ

But consumers are not the only ones who can save on their heating costs. In Massachusetts alone, state and federal agencies contributed over \$233 million to providing heating fuel assistance in 2008. Nationwide, fuel assistance programs in 2010 totaled over \$5.1 billion, with most of those expenditures supporting oil purchases. ***“By spending billions of dollars of public funds annually, the LIHEAP and state fuel assistance programs are essentially enabling our nation’s addiction to oil heating,”*** Strimling commented, ***“We are calling on policymakers to ensure that at least a portion of our heating assistance program funds are allocated to enable a transition to clean, renewable, locally produced, and carbon neutral heating fuels. This switch could provide heat at a lower cost, effectively enabling LIHEAP to provide coverage for more families across the state.”***

39% of Massachusetts homes are heated with heating oil, compared to a national average of just 9%. Those homes consumed 15,253,000 barrels of oil in 2008, and emitted 14 billion tons of CO₂.ⁱⁱ The Manomet study found that heating with renewable biomass instead of heating oil will reduce greenhouse

gas emissions by 25%. With the second highest residential fuel oil consumption in the nation, Massachusetts can slash greenhouse gas emissions by helping consumers make the switch from fossil fuels to renewable biomass fuels.

WoodPellets.com applauds Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Phil Giudice's desire to "begin the process of refining our renewable energy regulations to provide incentives only for biomass energy that truly reduces our greenhouse gas emissions and protects our forests."ⁱⁱⁱ Thermal biomass appliances are currently eligible for many clean energy tax credits and incentives, including a 30% federal tax credit, up to \$1,500, for qualifying biomass stoves. More than a million families in the U.S. already heat their homes with wood pellets or biomass fuels.

ⁱ <http://www.woodpellets.com/support/save-money-woodpellets.aspx>

ⁱⁱ U.S. Energy Information Administration, Independent Statistics and Analysis, State of Massachusetts, updated Jan. 2010.

: http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/state/state_energy_profiles.cfm?sid=MA

ⁱⁱⁱ Press Release, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources, "Patrick-Murray Administration Releases Biomass Sustainability Study," June 10, 2010

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