

www.nebioheat.org

Advocacy and Action in 2011: Northeast Biomass Thermal Working Group

NEBTWG is an informal network of biomass heating advocates across New England, New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Its purpose is to identify and implement strategies to accelerate growth and adoption of biomass heating in the northeastern U.S. A volunteer steering committee with representation from all industry sectors and these nine states provides leadership and direction. Funds generated from past Northeast Biomass Heating Expos provide modest financial support. NEBTWG is not a membership organization, but individuals who support its activities are encouraged to join the Biomass Thermal Energy Council (www.biomassthermal.org), or their state association if they have one (e.g. NY Biomass Energy Alliance, ME Pellet Fuel Assn, PA Biomass Energy Assn).

In 2011, NEBTWG undertook numerous actions to advance biomass heating in the northeast:

Advocacy and Action

- ✓ Issued a **Biomass Thermal Call to Action with over 440 signatories** to the governors and congressional delegations of these nine northeastern states, calling for federal and state action to advance biomass heating through policy, regulatory reform, education and R&D.
- ✓ Issued **Action Alerts to over 1,100 biomass thermal supporters urging grassroots advocacy on policies in MA, VT and NH**. These included input on MA's changes to RPS regs, VT's comprehensive energy plan, and NH's addition of thermal to its RPS program.
- ✓ **Helped analyze and develop statutory language to amend state renewable portfolio standards to include thermal energy** by hiring a professional consulting engineer.
- ✓ **Ensured strong northeastern representation at the 1st Washington DC Biomass Thermal Summit by providing travel stipends to northeastern advocates**. The Summit brought together over 70 biomass heating advocates from across the country for 43 individual meetings with members of Congress, their staff, and Administration officials.

Standards and Technical Analysis

- ✓ **Initiated a 30-member working group to develop a bulk wood pellet delivery and storage standard**, to ensure technically competent and safe operating procedures as this sector grows.

Public Education and Outreach

- ✓ **Issued state-specific biomass heating fact sheets for ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, RI, NY and PA**, highlighting the economic arguments for substituting locally sourced biomass thermal energy for imported heating oil. Available at www.nebioheat.org/resources.asp
- ✓ **Created the first ever 'Biomass Thermal Pavilion' at the Boston BE12 Expo**. Provided broad industry representation for biomass services and equipment at the region's dedicated sustainable energy and engineering conference.

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- ✓ **Provided program guidance for the 4th Annual Northeast Biomass Heating Expo.** NEBTWG's steering committee served as the program committee for the conference.
- ✓ **Supported biomass heating policy initiatives in New York and Maine** by providing \$1,000 mini-grants to the NY Biomass Energy Alliance and the Maine Pellet Fuels Assn.
- ✓ **Provided a grant to the "Heating the Midwest with Renewable Biomass" group now forming in the north central states,** as an expression of support for this parallel effort.
- ✓ **Expanded NEBTWG website resource library** to now include over 40 documents, reports, slide presentations and links to help biomass heating advocates communicate across the region.
- ✓ **Continued to promote "Heating the Northeast with Renewable Biomass: A Bold Vision for 2025",** our effort to define the potential growth and economic/environmental benefits of biomass thermal. Dozens of presentations across the region.
- ✓ **Developed a regional media key contacts database and issued several press releases** on key news items throughout the year

Total 2011 funds raised in support of NEBTWG activities:	\$40,929
Total 2011 expenditures	\$31,067
Balance carry forward to 2012:	\$ 9,862
Sources of Funds: 2011 Heating the Northeast with Renewable Biomass Conference, John Merck Fund (through BEREC), West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund	

2011 Steering Committee

Charlie Niebling, New England Wood Pellet (NH), Co-Chair
Andi Colnes, Biomass Energy Resource Center (VT), Co-Chair
Bob Perschel, Forest Guild, Northeast (MA)
John Ackerly, Alliance for Green Heat (MD)
Bill Bell, Maine Pellet Fuels Assn. (ME)
Dan Conable, NY Biomass Energy Alliance (NY)
Scott Nichols, TARMUSA (NH)
Bill Strauss, FutureMetrics and Maine Energy Systems ME)
David Dungate, ACT Bioenergy (NY)
Charlie Cary, Biomass Combustion Systems, Inc. (MA)
Rick Handley, Rick Handley & Associates (NY)
John Nikoloff/Melissa Britcher, PA Biomass Energy Assn (PA)
Marc Caluwe, Hydro-to-Heat-Convertor (MA)
Heidi Tarquinio, Fireside Supply Inc. (CT)

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Fiscal agent: Biomass Energy Resource Center, Montpelier VT