



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending January 23, 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 Static. 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 **\$2.38 per gallon** staying the same as last week. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$2.02 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$2.60 per gallon was found in the Eastern region. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$47.12 up almost \$10 from last week. The statewide kerosene price average is \$2.86 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.77 per gallon which is \$.18 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 January 26, 2009. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov** .

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Changes proposed for Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) Training and Certification program in Governor's Budget. SPO has put forth a proposal to fund the general-fund cost of the CEO program with fees. If approved by the Legislature in the biennial budget, fees would be assessed for training workshops and certification exams on the individual CEO (not the municipality) comparable to other professional certifications. A portion of the CEO program is already funded by fees on homeowners and businesses for plumbing and building permits. **CONTACT: Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov or Tony VanDenBossche at 287-1474 or tony.vandenbossche@maine.gov .**

Solid waste day at the Legislature. The Natural Resources Committee will hold an educational informational briefing on the topic of solid waste on Thursday, January 29th. They want the briefing to include, among other things, an overview of solid waste and solid waste management in Maine, a discussion of different types of waste and how they are regulated, the different types of facilities and how they are regulated, the duties of each agency, Juniper Ridge and its expansion, recycling and source reduction, etc. They also want the briefings to include background, findings, recommendations, etc. on all the solid waste reports that are due, including:

1. Solid waste generation and disposal capacity report (PL 2007, ch. 583, section 8 and 38 MRSA sec. 2124-A);
2. Solid waste odor management report (PL 2007, ch. 583, section 9);
3. Duties and responsibilities for managing solid waste (PL 2007, ch. 583, section 10);
4. Solid waste disposal facility recycling standards (PL 2007, ch. 583, section 11);
5. Landfill gas and odor management (Resolves 2007, ch. 170);
6. Annual report on the activities of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council (38 MRSA, sec. 2123-C, subsec. 6); and
7. Submission of the updated state waste management and recycling plan (38 MRSA sec. 2124).

CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5759 or george.macdonald@maine.gov .

DIRECTORS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

Quality of Place council supports bonds. The Maine Quality of Place Council met on January 14 to discuss bond needs related to quality of place. The Council hopes to make the connection between the bond proposals that are out there already and Maine's quality of place; such as the requests for community/downtown preservation, New Century communities, Land for Maine's Future, state parks, and DOT bike and pedestrian trails, each of which advance the Q of P agenda and have the Council's strong support. The goal is to promote an interrelated package that supports both the landscape and the built environment. The council's next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2009, 1:30pm to 5:00pm. **CONTACT: Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov or Kate Reilly at 287-1479 or Catherine.reilly@maine.gov .**

ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Kate Reilly to leave SPO. State Economist Kate Reilly will leave SPO on February 6 to embark on new endeavors. Kate's four-year stint at SPO saw a number of changes. She ushered in the Office's tracking of LD 1 objectives, providing the [annual progress report](#) requested by the Legislature. She co-authored a significant research piece to jump start the State's quality of place effort, *[Place and Prosperity](#)*. And she launched the SPO economics newsletter. Kate also oversaw a complete turnover of SPO staff economists. When several long-standing employees retired, Kate recruited a new, highly-skilled team of economists. Under Kate's leadership, policymakers came to rely on accurate data and information to aid their decision-making. Kate was named SPO's William Twarog manager of the year in 2008. We will miss her warmth, caring, intelligence, humor, and integrity. **CONTACT: Tony VanDenBossche at 287-1474 or tony.vandenbossche@Maine.gov or Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov**

Mike LeVert named Acting State Economist. Mike LeVert, a current member of SPO's economics and demographics staff, will serve as Acting State Economist upon the departure of Kate Reilly. Mike is an economist and statistician with a master's degree in resource economics from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. His interests include non-market valuation (quantifying benefits associated with goods not traded in a market, like the environment), and leveraging Maine's quality of place as an economic development strategy. Mike has experience with data analysis software tools and is the president of SAS Users Group of Maine. He has worked as a statistician for the marketing department at LL Bean, and, most recently, as a health care data analyst for a disease management firm in Portland. Mike lives in Cumberland with his wife Fonda, daughter Robin, and dog Jack. **CONTACT: Tony VanDenBossche at 287-1474 or tony.vandenbossche@Maine.gov or Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov**

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Martin Luther King Day of Service a Success. The Maine Commission for Community Service provided funding for 10 Martin Luther King Day of Service projects statewide from Kennebunk to Houlton. There were over 400 volunteers who donated more than 1300 hours during the January 19th celebration. Volunteers' donated food, knit blankets, painted murals, and educated the public on Dr. Martin Luther King's teachings. Many projects were featured on local news and in newspapers across the state. **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or rochelle.runge@maine.gov .**