



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

*Week ending February 6, 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 **\$2.33 per gallon** dropping .04 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 \$1.94 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$2.55 per gallon was found in the Northern region. At the time of this release the price of WTI crude oil, major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil was \$41.02 dropping from last week. The statewide kerosene price average is \$2.81 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.85 per gallon which is \$.06 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 February 9, 2009. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or [ian.burnes@maine.gov](mailto:ian.burnes@maine.gov) .**

## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

**First Lady hosts recycling poster contest winners.** On February 4<sup>th</sup> students and their families and teachers were the guests of the First Lady as they were recognized for their winning poster contest entries. Mrs. Baldacci spoke of the need to recycle, replenish, and to respect our earth. Thirteen poster designs, submitted during Maine Recycles Week events, were selected out of more than 1800 entries to become part of the 2009 *Maine Recycles* calendar. Students from grades 3 to 12 and from Bath to Rangeley received certificates from the First Lady. More than 5000 copies of the calendar are now on the walls of homes, schools and offices in Maine. Calendars are available to order on-line at: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/recycle/index.htm>.

**CONTACT:** Bruce A. White at (207) 287-8053 or [bruce.white@maine.gov](mailto:bruce.white@maine.gov) / [www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com).



Pictured front left to right: Tessa Gervais, Chelsea; Hunter Harrington, Readfield; Natalie Kudakwashe, Portland; Arielle Leeman, Bath; Rylie Turner, Portland; Dominic Averill, Portland; Spencer Weiss, Friendship. Back Row: Mrs. Baldacci; Alex Needham, Bath; Mike Anctil, Livermore Falls; Duncan Hutchinson, Hermon; and Chloe Monsen, Portland.

## **POLICY AND MANAGMENT**

**Budget Sessions scheduled.** The Appropriations Committee will hold a public hearing on SPO's biennial budget proposal on Monday, February 9, 2009 at 9:00 am in Room 228. The State and Local Government Committee will hold a work session on February 18 at 1:00 pm in Room 216. **CONTACT: Tony VanDenBossche at 207-287-1474 or [tony.vandenbossche@maine.gov](mailto:tony.vandenbossche@maine.gov) .**

## **COASTAL PROGRAM**

**Goochs Beach Recommendations Completed.** The Maine Healthy Beaches Program (MHB) and the Maine Geological Survey (MGS) have completed a new report that looks at bacteria monitoring results and circulation patterns for Goochs Beach in Kennebunk, and makes recommendations for future action to clean up the beach. Goochs Beach has had chronically high bacteria counts during swimming season, so we conducted a series of studies to try and determine zones of contribution and 'hot spots' for pollutants. We will meet in March with town officials, local volunteers, and regional water quality groups to discuss what we've found, further identify and clean up pollution sources, and better predict unsafe swimming conditions. The report can be found at <http://www.state.me.us/spo/coastal/beaches.htm>. **CONTACT: Paula Thomson, 287-1482 or [paula.thomson@maine.gov](mailto:paula.thomson@maine.gov) .**

**Right of Way Rediscovery Presentation Made.** Jim Connors, Senior Planner with the Maine Coastal Program, recently made a presentation about the Right of Way Rediscovery (RoW) Grant program at the annual meeting of the Maine Society of Land Surveyors. The goal of the RoW grant program is to assist coastal towns with the rediscovery, and where possible, to re-assert public claims to legal shore access. Speaking in a workshop setting, Jim covered the purposes and functions of the program using examples from some of the 80 project grants that have been made by the program since 1994. Small grants are offered annually to coastal towns. **CONTACT: Jim Connors at 287-8938 or [jim.connors@maine.gov](mailto:jim.connors@maine.gov) .**

## Land Use Team

**First comprehensive plan to be adopted by Dixmont.** Last Wednesday, February 4, 2009, the Dixmont Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly (95–5) to adopt the proposed comprehensive plan. Dixmont’s new plan is particularly noteworthy for a number of reasons. It was the second plan to be submitted and reviewed and found consistent under our new Comp Plan Review Criteria Rule and it was developed and written by the Comprehensive Plan Committee with little professional assistance. Finally, it’s the first comprehensive plan to be adopted by Dixmont and the first new–rule–consistent plan to be adopted by any community. **CONTACT: Phil Carey at 287–3860 or [phil.carey@maine.gov](mailto:phil.carey@maine.gov).**