



## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

*Week ending March 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

**Propane and Heating Oil 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 **\$2.15 per gallon** dropping \$.05 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 \$1.65 per gallon was found in the Southwestern region. The high-end price of \$2.35 per gallon was found in the Eastern, & 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 \$2.60 per gallon at this time. Today's propane price survey found statewide average to be \$2.77 per gallon which is \$.15 lower 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 9, 2009. CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or [ian.burnes@maine.gov](mailto:ian.burnes@maine.gov).

## THE MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

**AmeriCorps 101.** The Maine Commission for Community Service is offering local organizations and collaborations a chance to get to know AmeriCorps. This is the first step in preparation for the spring grant round. This webinar was originally held in February and is being offered a second time due to the overwhelming response.

The workshop will be held on Wednesday, March 18, from 9:00–11am and will introduce attendees to AmeriCorps and the opportunity to apply for funding for programs that need 10 or more AmeriCorps members. In addition, we will look at the purpose and culture of AmeriCorps as well as the basic elements of successful grant proposals. To participate, a person will need access to the internet and a phone line or voice-over-internet protocol (VOIP). Registration is required in order to ensure enough connections for the session. To register, [click here](#). Connection details will be sent the week prior to March 18th. **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 287-8933 or [rochelle.runge@maine.gov](mailto:rochelle.runge@maine.gov).**



***VolunteerFare* released.** The Maine Commission for Community Service released its newsletter, *VolunteerFare*, this week. *VolunteerFare* aims to provide volunteer program managers, sponsors, and funders with a forum for exchanging news, technical information, best practices, recommendations on useful resources and more. In this issue topics included risk management, March Meals for Wheels, an article about a community service project in Biddeford, and training announcements. To read the newsletter in its entirety or subscribe please [visit us online](#). **CONTACT: Rochelle Runge at 207.287.8933 or [rochelle.runge@maine.gov](mailto:rochelle.runge@maine.gov)**

## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

**Solid Waste Management Advisory Council submits annual report.** In accordance with 38 MRSA §2123-C, the council submitted its report to the Legislature's natural resources committee. The Council is authorized to meet at least once a year to advise and assist the State Planning Office in reviewing Maine's solid waste policies. The Council met twice in 2008 and its work carried over into a third meeting held in January, 2009. The Council's work during 2008 focused on reviewing and providing input on drafts of the state *Waste Management and Recycling Plan*. The council's input provided the State Planning Office with the public input required in the development of the plan. During 2008, the council also discussed its role and relationship with the State Planning Office and its hope that it can continue to grow its influence as a force for positive change in solid waste policy in Maine. The report and more information about the council are available on-line at:

<http://www.maine.gov/spo/boards/wastemanagement/index.htm>. CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5759 or [george.macdonald@maine.gov](mailto:george.macdonald@maine.gov)

## DIRECTOR'S POLICY AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Bond package released this week.** Several of the bond requests support quality of place initiatives that this and the previous QOP council have advanced.

Proposed bonds supporting "Quality Places" are:

- \$18m for the Land for Maine's Future Program
- \$3m for Working Waterfront Access
- \$2m for New Century Communities
- \$1m for Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails
- \$2m for an Endangered Community Buildings Bond

The Legislature's Appropriations Committee has scheduled public hearings on the bonds next week in Room 228 of the Capitol Building. The hearings related to QOP bonds are scheduled as follows:

**Land and Environment: March 10, 9:00am**

Includes Land for Maine's Future, Working Waterfronts, and Endangered Community Buildings

**Transportation: March 10, 2:00pm (after energy bonds)**

Includes Trails

**R&D: March 11, 9:00am**

Includes New Century Program

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