



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Week ending May 26, 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.

DIRECTORS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

Summer interns arrive! SPO is hosting four college students this summer to carry out needed research and work projects.

Jason Reed, a graduate student at Harvard University, will work on several land use projects including options for implementing lighting standards for commercial development to preserve Maine's dark skies (a task assigned to SPO by Legislature this session in Resolves 2009, Chapter 22). Jason's undergraduate degree is in journalism from the University of Minnesota. At Harvard he is studying general management with a concentration in non-profit management. He lives in Brunswick.

Kevin Sprague is a master's candidate in community planning and development at USM. He currently holds a BS in environmental design from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and an associate's degrees in agronomy from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture in Amherst. Kevin will be working to update and maintain Maine's land conservation GIS data. He lives in Portland.

Sadie Kitchen just completed her third year at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, NY where she is pursuing a double major in government and international affairs and a minor in business. Sadie just returned from a semester in Austria where she studied American foreign policy and relations in Europe. She will evaluate single-stream recycling; its impacts on municipalities and public recycling programs, marketing

issues with single-stream recyclables, and public views on the new collection system. Sadie grew up in Yarmouth.

Chris Keeley is researching land use options to address rising sea level in Maine's coastal communities. He just finished his senior year at the University of New Hampshire and will be returning in the fall for one more semester to complete his environmental conservation studies major. Chris, who is a native of Jefferson, ME, is an avid downhill skier and bass fisherman.

We are delighted to have this talented group of young people with us for the summer. CONTACT: Jody Harris at 287-5424 or Jody.Harris@maine.gov .

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Maine Compost Team featured in national publication. An article in this month's [Biocycle](#) magazine describes Maine's poultry carcass composting trials. Research trials assessing use of composting to manage poultry mortalities found it to be a suitable tool, achieving temperatures necessary to inactivate the Avian Influenza Virus. This suggests that poultry growers could use composting for disposal of carcasses infected with the avian flu virus without concern for transmission of the virus. The compost team conducted their research during the late summer and fall of 2006 at Highmoor Farm, a University of Maine Experimental Research Farm in Monmouth. The team comprises expert staff from the Maine departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and State Planning Office. CONTACT: George MacDonald at 287-5759 or George.MacDonald@maine.gov .

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating Oil Price Averages Rising Slightly. The Governor's Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) conducted its off season oil survey and has found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be at **\$2.11 per gallon** \$.02 higher than last week's survey. 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 \$1.75 per gallon was found in the Western region. The high-end price of \$2.35 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 \$48.53. The statewide kerosene price average

is \$2.55 per gallon at this time. The next survey is scheduled for June 1, 2009.
CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov .

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

VolunteerMaine.org webinar series announced. VolunteerMaine.org is a statewide link between agencies looking for volunteers and people interested in volunteering. Webinars will range from the basics of VolunteerMaine.org to more advanced features; these monthly webinars will feature experts from the VolunteerMaine Partnership to help organizations get the most out of VolunteerMaine.org. The first 60-minute webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, June 10th at 9:00 AM. "VolunteerMaine for Agencies: The Basics" will give an overview of the features of www.VolunteerMaine.org. Click [here](#) to register. CONTACT: Pam Zeutenhorst at 287.5313 or pam.zeutenhorst@maine.gov.