

Biomass Incinerators Planned for Massachusetts

Fitchburg - CCI Energy (Cost Containment Inc.) wants to start up a 5MW incinerator at the now closed Munksjo Paper mill on River Street (the original plan was for 15MW, but they scaled down to “simplify the approval process.”) CCI also wants to start an incinerator at Simmonds International, a saw and steel manufacturing company on Intervale Road.

The plants would burn wood chips and “other biological components.” According to locals, an already operating Fitchburg incinerator is burning cubes of compressed “biomass” made of waste paper from International Paper and shredded medical waste. More info at: www.cci-energy.com and www.wbjournal.com/news43420.html

Greenfield - Madera Energy Inc, operating as Pioneer Renewable Energy, wants to build a 47 MW incinerator to burn wood chips, mill waste, and pallets. Madera Principal Matthew Wolfe is the former project director for now defunct Tamarack Energy, which has been involved with initiating “biomass” plants throughout the Northeast. Tamarack helped with engineering startup of the biomass plant in Old Town that burns CDD. Tamarack initiated the permitting of a Pittsfield, MA biomass plant that now has new owners, as well as a 30 MW biomass plant in Watertown, CT, that is now owned by Energy Investors Fund (EIF), an investment group that funds energy projects using landfill gas, biomass, and municipal waste.

Pittsfield - Berkshire Generations Inc wants to start up a 30 to 50 MW incinerator to burn whole tree chips, sawmill residue, pallets. Initiated up by Tamarack Energy, of which Matt Wolfe (now with Madera) was a Project Director. Tamarack abandoned the Pittsfield project, which has now been picked up by Doug Crane, a vice president at Crane & Co., and Stephen Sears, a local land use consultant, who formed Berkshire Generations Inc. More info at: www.istockanalyst.com/article/viewiStockNews/articleid/3137271

Russell - Rusell Biomass LLC wants to build a 50-megawatt incinerator to burn whole tree chips, sawmill residue, and pallets (including possibly treated and painted wood). The company that is developing the incinerator, ARS Group out of Wellesley, MA, is headed by Peter Bos, who developed the Stratton incinerator in Eustis, Maine which has a history of high priority violations of the Clean Air Act. The Stratton incinerator started burning plain wood chips, but was sold to Boralex in 1998, and began burning CDD. More info at: www.russellbiomass.com/whoweare and www.concernedcitizensofrussell.org

Springfield - Caletta Renewable wants to build a 30 to 50-megawatt incinerator to burn construction and demolition debris and wood chips. Caletta is a partnership between Palmer Paving Corporation and Barletta Engineering, operating as Caletta Renewable out of Canton. The incinerator would be located on land owned by Palmer Paving in East Springfield. More info at <http://www.calettarenewable.com>

Biomass Incinerator in Livermore Falls, Maine

Maine – The Biomass Plantation State.

Maine has had biomass incinerators since the 1980s and provides an excellent case study for the problems with this electricity source. All of the plants built in the 1980’s and 90’s started out burning only forest biomass. Eight have amended their licenses (with little to no Public notice or approval) to allow other materials to be mixed with the wood being burned, including railroad ties, carpet, tires, and especially construction and demolition debris (CDD), which can include arsenic treated wood, wood painted with lead and mercury-based

paints, PVC, plastics, and other materials that become more toxic when burned.

Maine Biomass Incinerators that were built to burn plain wood, but received permits to burn construction and demolition debris (CDD) after they were built:

Athens - In 2004, Massachusetts-based GenPower announced plans to build a 40MW incinerator on the site of a former 16 MW incinerator owned by Montreal-based Boralex, a subsidiary of Canadian paper-company Cascades. The former Boralex incinerator was built to burn only plain wood chips, but started burning toxic CDD in the late 1990's.

There were numerous problems in trying to burn the waste, which is allowed to include PVC plastics, arsenic-treated wood, cement, and wood coated with lead and mercury-based paint, and there were reports of people who worked there having to climb inside the incinerator to manually chip out hardened melted debris.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) fined Boralex for over \$600,000 after toxic fires in the fuel pile smoldered for over 6 weeks, spreading toxic smoke over the town that sent people to the hospital, caused local schools to keep children indoors for recess, and killed local birds. The incinerator finally shut down, and was sent to Old Town to be restarted by Georgia Pacific, where it runs, with most of the same major problems, to this day.

Less than a year later, people in Athens heard about plans for a new "biomass boiler" at a Town meeting to approve "Pine Tree Zone" tax-break status for GenPower. John Baldacci's brother, Robert, working for Pierce

Atwood at the time, made the presentation, claiming that there would be no environmental threats from the proposed GenPower "boiler." After approval, it came out that GenPower planned to incinerate 3 million pounds a day of CDD, imported mostly from Massachusetts. It would have been funded in large part by Massachusetts Renewable Energy Credits.

GenPower has unsuccessfully tried to build similar incinerators in NH and MA, and is trying to build a coal-fired plant in West Virginia. Two of GenPower's main representatives are former reps of Alternative Energy Inc, the violations-ridden company that ran the Livermore Falls, Ashland, and Stratton incinerators.

People in the local Community formed a group called Citizens Against Pollution in Town (CAPIT), and began educating each other about the incinerator and organizing to stop it, through meetings, dinners, rallies, art, contacting the media and government, and taking action.

Plans for the incinerator were successfully stopped. GenPower's lease with Athens-based Linkletter and Sons, and permit applications with the DEP were withdrawn, and the People of Athens successfully passed a local ordinance that bans the Commercial Incineration of CDD Waste in Town. People are now working to set up a local recycling program, and to help people pass similar ordinances in other threatened towns.

Ashland - Home to a 40 MW Boralex-owned Incinerator that is permitted to burn over 456 million pounds a year of construction and demolition waste and treated wood from railroad ties and utility poles. Originally built by Alternative Energy Inc (AEI) to burn only plain wood chips, amended its license to allow CDD incineration. AEI almost bankrupted the town when it claimed the town overvalued the plant, and tried to get multiple years worth of taxes plus interest refunded – only after spending over a million dollars in legal fees, did the small town of Ashland win in Superior Court. The incinerator was in High Priority Violation of the Clean Air Act from 2005 to 2007.*

Eustis - Home to the Stratton Energy incinerator, started by the ARS group, then sold to Boralex in 1998. Originally built to burn plain wood, in 2002 got its license amended to allow it to burn over half a million pounds a day of Construction & Demolition waste. Has a history of High Priority Violations of the Clean Air Act.*

Greenville - Home to the Greenville Steam Company 19 MW biomass incinerator was originally built to burn plain wood, but amended its license to permit it to burn burn CDD and carpet waste (though it appears to currently be burning only wood chips and some carpet.) The town of Greenville has struggled to maintain tax income as the company has pressured the town to significantly decrease its valuation, thus cutting an already

very limited tax base. Owned by NH-based New Energy Capital Corporation. Receives significant funding from MA Renewable Energy Credits.

Livermore Falls- Home to the 40 MW Beaver Wood Power incinerator previously owned by Alternative Energy Inc., now owned by Boralex. Originally built to burn plain wood chips and sawmill residue, the company's amended the license to allow burning over one million pounds a day of CDD, plus utility poles, railroad ties, and other treated and painted wood. The incinerator has a long history of air emissions violations, including a fire in the outdoor fuel pile that lasted for over a month. Has a history of High Priority Violations of the Clean Air Act since 2005. According to 2006 company air emissions data with the Maine DEP, the incinerator was shown to be releasing over 4 pounds of lead a day in its emissions. Receives significant funding through MA RECs. Lead in emissions info from : <http://www.maine.gov/dep/bep/2007/04-05-07/RED%20SHIELD%20APPEAL.PDF> *

Old Town - Home to an incinerator previously owned by the Boralex and located in in Athens. Boralex was able to partially pay its fine for emissions violations by sending the old incinerator to the former Georgia Pacific Paper mill in Old Town for use by Red Shield Environmental, a group of investors with close ties to Maine Government officials and the waste industry. The boiler was built in the early 1980's to burn plain wood chips, but through license amendments, it has DEP approval to burn over a million pounds a day of CDD. Casella provides half-price Construction and Demolition waste from its publicly-subsidised landfills to the Old Town Georgia Pacific incinerator. Red Shield temporarily stopped burning this waste after the CDD incineration resulted in a lead-filled toxic soot to rain over the neighboring town of Bradley, which is reported to have killed at least two dogs. It is unclear if any CDD is being burned right now, but it is being trucked in from throughout New England and stockpiled for future incineration. Photos of the plant at <http://www.redshieldenv.com>. Award-winning article on the Casella/Old Town dump and incinerator deal, "Dumping Ground" online at: www.portlandphoenix.com/features/top/ts_multi/documents/03719391.asp

Staceyville - Home to the 18 MW Sherman Energy owned by Boralex, previous owned by Wheelabrator. Built in 1986 to burn plain wood and sawmill residue, it amended its license to allow incinerations of CDD, and treated wood from utility poles and railroad ties. Has a history of High Priority Violations of the Clean Air Act.

Westbrook - South African Pulp and Paper International (SAPPI - formerly SD Warren) received approval in 2007 from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to start burning over one million pounds a day of construction and demolition waste at its Westbrook mill. The incinerator ash will be either that the company runs it through its water treatment plant and dumped it into the Presumpscot River, or sent to the West Old Town landfill, or it is used as fill under roads. The plant has also has problems with fires resulting from spontaneous combustion in the fuel pile. Casella also is working to gain approval to build a large CDD processing facility in Westbrook to process incoming CDD waste from out-of-state and send it to Maine landfills and incinerators.

Potential CDD incinerators:

Jonesboro - Home to a 25 MW incinerator/boiler first owned by Indeck Energy of Illinois, sold in 2008 to Covanta Energy. Under Indeck ownership, only plain wood chips were burned, but there is concern that Covanta, a New Jersey corporation in the business of burning all sorts of waste to produce electricity that has been found guilty of numerous health and worker rights violations, will begin burning other materials.

Madison – Home to Backyard Farms' two 30-acre greenhouses. Backyard Farms plans to build a biomass boiler to burn wood and other "wood wastes" that have been rumored in local media to include CDD.

Millinocket – Home to the former Katahdin Paper/Great Northern Mill, bought out by Brookfield Asset Management for the purpose of generating power from biomass and other "wood wastes," that many are concerned will include CDD.

West Enfield – Home to a 25 MW incinerator/boiler first owned by Indeck Energy of Illinois, sold in 2008 to Covanta Energy. Under Indeck ownership, only plain wood chips were burned, but there is concern that Covanta, a New Jersey corporation in the business of burning all sorts of waste to produce electricity that has been found guilty of numerous health and worker rights violations, will begin burning other materials.

* The Ashland, Eustis, and Livermore Falls incinerators stopped burning CDD after Connecticut stopped providing subsidies for CDD incineration through Class I Renewable Energy Credits. These plants are still licensed to burn CDD, and if the Federal Climate Change Bill passes in the Senate in its current form, major subsidies will become available throughout the country for CDD incineration, allowing these plants to restart burning these toxic materials.

Learn More...

Info on Clean Air Act Violations: www.epa-echo.gov/echo/compliance_report_air.html

Title V Emissions Licenses – What’s coming out the stack: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/licensing/titlev.htm>

Info on MA Renewable Energy Credit Funding for Maine Plants:

http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeeaternal&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Energy%2C+Utilities+%26+Clean+Technologies&L2=Renewable+Energy&L3=Renewable+Portfolio+Standard&sid=Eoeea&b=terminalcontent&f=doer_rps_approved&csid=Eoeea

The Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives: www.no-burn.org

Energy Justice Network: www.energyjustice.org * 215-743-4884

Biomass Communities Blog: biomasscommunities.blogspot.com

No Biomass Burning – Stop Waxman Markey: www.nobiomassburning.org

Mass Forest Watch: www.maforests.org

Lead Free or Die, NH: www.leadfreeordie.com

Citizens Against Pollution in Town (CAPIT), c/o Hillary Lister, PO Box 129, Athens, ME 04912, 649-5980, hillary@maineindymedia.org

Concerned Citizens of Russell, P.O. Box 481, Russell, MA 01071, 413-862-0037,

www.concernedcitizensofrussell.org

Greenfield Biomass Info: www.greenfieldbiomass.info

Citizens Rights in Maine's Environment (CRIME) – Great info on Biomass in Maine: CRIME c/o Gibbs, 78 Old Stagecoach Rd, Alton, ME 04468, (207) 827-5358

Prevent Harm – A Resource and Action Center on Children and the Environment: www.preventingharm.org

Rachel’s News – News and Resources for Environmental Justice: www.rachel.org

The Story of Stuff – Excellent Short Video on Waste and Incineration: www.storyofstuff.com

Waste Not – Project of Paul Connett, Waste Researcher and Chemistry Professor at St. Lawrence University, (315) 379-9200, it.stlawu.edu/~chem/faculty/connett.htm & americanhealthstudies.org/video.html

Questions – Additions – Corrections - Comments — Contact:

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