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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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November 23, 2004

Bioheat Offers Cost-Competitive, Environmentally Friendly Alternative to Regular Home Heating Oil

Energy retailers in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania provide bioheat for the first time

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – As the Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicts that home heating bills will increase by 15 percent this winter and political leaders talk about the need to decrease U.S. dependence on foreign sources of oil, blending domestically produced biodiesel with heating oil is gaining momentum, according to industry officials. “Bioheat” offers a cost-competitive alternative to regular heating oil and is becoming increasingly available, particularly in the Northeast.

Cleaner burning biodiesel -- made from renewable resources like soybeans and other natural fats and oils -- can be used to power oil furnaces and boilers, helping to increase U.S. energy security and significantly lowering emissions. Primarily used as a transportation fuel, biodiesel can also be blended with regular No. 2 heating oil or low sulfur heating oil. These blends of biodiesel and heating oil have come to be called bioheat.

Two companies in the Northeast have recently joined a growing number of energy retailers that provide bioheat to their customers. In addition, the State of Maine has expanded its use of bioheat and is heating the State House, Cross State Office Building, State Museum and a number of other buildings with a biodiesel blend this year.

MASS BIOFUEL, the sister company of Fisher Churchill Oil Co. in Dedham, Mass., began offering customers a blend of soy biodiesel and low sulfur heating oil on November 1. According to Bob Warren, MASS BIOFUEL president, although the marketing efforts have just begun the initial response from his customers has been extremely positive.

“Bioheat's time has come,” said Warren. “Customers are looking for alternatives. They are fed up with OPEC. Bioheat will reduce our dependency on foreign oil, help clean up the environment and increase income for our American farmers.”

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This message was echoed by officials at Manheim, Penn.-based Worley & Obetz, Inc, which also began providing bioheat to its customers this year. All of the company's delivery trucks run on a soy biodiesel blend as well. They estimate that, on average, there are five gallons of renewable fuel in each home heating oil delivery.

"We are a local family-owned business and we care about our communities and our environment," said Fred Thomas, Sales & Marketing Manager for Worley & Obetz, Inc. "That's why we made a commitment to bring bioheat to our customers, increase demand through education and awareness and develop new markets for our farmers."

Biodiesel has a proven track record. Not only is it used as a transportation fuel by about 500 government and commercial fleets, but it has been tested in heating applications as well. Testing conducted by the Massachusetts Oilheat Council (MOC) and the National Oilheat Research Alliance found that a blend of 80 percent low-sulfur heating oil and 20 percent biodiesel (B20) reduced sulfur oxide emissions by as much as 80 percent or more. Nitrogen Oxide emissions were lowered by about 20 percent. In addition, carbon dioxide emissions can be lowered by 20 percent.

Testing conducted by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) at Brookhaven National Laboratory on both a commercial and residential boiler found that biodiesel use (at various blend levels) resulted in lower carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions.

Officials at U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center have successfully heated buildings with bioheat since 2000. They estimate that if everyone in the Northeast with an oil furnace used a B5 blend (five percent biodiesel/95 percent heating oil), 50 million gallons of regular heating oil could be conserved.

"Bioheat is a smart choice for home heating," said Joe Jobe, executive director of the National Biodiesel Board. "It's not only a renewable resource, but can help to protect the environment, keep equipment cleaner and reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil by extending our supply of heating oil."

The United Soybean Board and state soybean board checkoff programs funded much of the development of the biodiesel industry in the U.S. Soybean farmers have invested millions of dollars in bringing biodiesel into commercial success. Today, it is the fastest growing alternative fuel in America.

Readers can learn more about biodiesel by visiting <http://www.biodiesel.org>.

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