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Green Electricity is Here, In a Big Way

Mainers Buy Over 30,000,000 Kilowatt-Hours of Green Electricity in Connection's First Year

BRUNSWICK, Maine – Clean, green electricity became a market force to be reckoned with in 2003. In the first year of the Maine Green Power Connection's existence, individuals and organizations in Maine purchased more than 30 million kilowatt hours of "green" electricity from renewable sources. If these 30 million kilowatt hours had all been generated by the standard offer mix of power sources (which includes plants that burn coal, oil and natural gas), more than 23 million pounds of global-warming carbon dioxide, 54 thousand pounds of acidic nitrogen oxide and 78,000 pounds of smog-forming sulfur dioxide would have been emitted into the atmosphere—the pollution equivalent of 3,000 cars on Maine's highways.

Why are Mainers buying green power?

Here are just two reasons; read on for more.

It brings attention to your mission and your business – "Green power fits with our mission, our ethic and our values... taking this step is noticed by our students, certainly, but also by neighbors, friends, faculty, prospective students, and even donors. This single step (buying green power) has garnered more attention than

any other single thing we have done for the college during my tenure.” David Glenn-Lewin, President, Unity College, Unity.

It's the right thing to do -- "We are all part of the web of life, and yet we also live in this complicated modern world. As a consumer of electricity, reducing the amount of carbon I am responsible for is a personal goal, at home and at work." Russell French, Russell French Photographers, Portland.

“Green, renewable electricity is ready for the job of powering Maine,” said Erika Morgan, program manager for the Maine Green Power Connection. “With new products and new production facilities, plus the renewables Maine already has, we have the ability to replace a significant amount of the dirty power coming to Maine”. This year promises equally impressive expansion for Maine’s green electricity marketplace. Green power is here and its use is growing in many ways:

- More buyers – Over 60 Maine businesses and organizations have purchased green power since the option became available. Sixty-one are listed on the Connection’s website. Looking for a green-powered bed-and-breakfast or lamp repair shop? The Directory of “Connected Companies” can find one for you.
- Larger buyers – Institutions have led the green power parade. MeGPC Partners **York Hospital, Colby College** and **Unity College** have all bought green power. **Interface Fabrics**, which helped launch the Connection in March 2003 with the purchase of 2.5 Million kilowatt-hours for 2003, will continue that purchase for the next 5 years.
- More Products – Any Mainer can now buy green power. The available choices continue to grow. The Connection’s Green Power Menu was launched in September ’03 with six different products – starting today, 15 are listed.
- More Kilowatt-hours sold – Most of today’s green power customers have purchased under multi-year contracts. Counting only those green power purchases already committed, more than 50 million kilowatt hours of green electricity will be sold in Maine during the Connection’s second year of operation.
- Cleaner Air – If 2003’s green power was the pollution equivalent of removing 3,000 cars from Maine’s roads, next year’s green power sales –based *only* on contracts already in hand – could represent the air pollution equivalent to removing over 5,000 cars. Every additional green power purchase helps move Maine closer to cleaner air.

Why Buy Green Power? It Just Makes Sense.

Here are a few more reasons that Maine’s businesses and institutions are buying green power:

- It protects the environment on which Maine's natural resource-based businesses rely—“We are definitely noticing that the ocean is warming, and with every degree it warms, the plants on which we depend are more stressed. I know that the true costs of all energy sources don't reflect the environmental degradation that those sources cause—it's worth it to me to help carry some of those costs, to protect these resources.” Shep Erhart, Owner, Maine Coast Sea Vegetables, Franklin.
- It cleans Maine's air -- "Green power is an inexpensive and immediate way to improve our air quality. As a founding member of the Maine Green Power Connection, we call on all of our colleagues in public health and health care organizations to sign on." Ed Miller, CEO, American Lung Association of Maine, Augusta.
- It helps Maine's health -- "We selected green power because we're a health care facility and we believe in making purchasing decisions that will improve the health of Maine citizens and be beneficial to Maine's environment." Clark James, Facilities Specialist, York Hospital, York.

What's Next in 2004? Maine Green Power Connection Highlights

The Connection is funded by grants from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation and the John Merck Fund. With this support, MeGPC has developed many more ways to spread the word about green, environmentally beneficial electricity. Over the next three months stay tuned for:

- Awareness Campaign – Today, the Connection launches a 13-week campaign to raise the visibility of green power. MeGPC will host Maine Public Radio sponsorships, print advertising, and spotlight purchase announcements and other workshops, conferences and events now through June.
- New Partners – Six new organizations have joined the Connection this spring, all pledging to contribute resources and share information about green power with their constituencies. The six: The **Green Store**, Belfast; **Environment Maine**, Portland; **Maine Businesses for Social Responsibility**, Belfast; **Maine Public Health Association**, Augusta; and the **Maple Hill Farm B&B Inn and Conference Center**, Hallowell.
- More purchase announcements ahead – Other leading Maine institutions are readying their own green power purchase announcements. The Connection has assisted them through education about green power and their purchase options, and also by extending word of their purchases to a wide public audience.

What does it all mean? Mainers want clean air, and are willing to vote with their pocketbooks to achieve it. And clean, green power from renewable resources is ready to fulfill its promise for Maine – it's clean and reliable, affordable and immediately available. For more information about the Maine Green Power Connection, visit www.MaineGreenPower.org.

New Partners for 2004

These organizations have stepped forward in 2004 to assist the Maine Green Power Connection in building the market for environmentally beneficial electricity. We thank them for their leadership:

The Green Store, Belfast

Environment Maine, Portland

Maine Businesses for Social Responsibility, Belfast

Maine Public Health Association, Augusta

Maple Hill Farm B&B Inn and Conference Center, Hallowell

York Hospital, York

Charter organizations

American Lung Association of Maine

Chewonki Foundation

Interface Fabrics Group

Maine Interfaith Power and Light, Inc.

National Environmental Trust

Supporting organizations

Colby College

College of the Atlantic

Endless Energy Corporation

Maine Energy Investment Corporation

Maine Renewable Energy LLC

Unity College

Urquhart & Spritz

Advisory organizations

Ed Holt & Associates, Inc.

Energetic Management Associates

Environment Northeast

Independent Energy Producers of Maine

Participating organizations

Coastal Enterprises, Inc.

Damariscotta River Association

Habitat for Humanity/Bath-Brunswick Area

Maine Audubon

Maine Council of Churches

Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

Peace Action Maine

Physicians for Social Responsibility, Maine Chapter

Sierra Club, Maine Chapter

Photo caption:

Ed Miller, CEO, American Lung Association of Maine (ALAM), stands at the door of his Augusta office, showing off the logo of his green electricity provider. Many Maine businesses and organizations now wear this and other green power labels with pride. ALAM is a Charter participant in the Maine Green Power Connection. (photo by Jane Ann McNeish).

