

## **Renewables are Ready: MTC Grant to Support Clean Energy Leadership in Worcester**

Contact: Carissa Williams, Clean Energy Coordinator Worcester (508-799-9139)

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WORCESTER – Worcester’s Regional Environmental Council (REC) and Clean Water Fund (CWF) have been awarded a 10-month \$42,700 grant from Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC). REC and CWF will use this grant to educate Worcester’s residents and businesses about the benefits of clean energy options available locally. The groups will also urge the City of Worcester to lead by example and purchase a portion of the electricity used in municipal buildings from clean, renewable sources. This clean energy project will kick-off with REC’s annual meeting on Monday, Nov. 15 at 6:30pm at Clark University’s Tilton Hall.

“Our goal is to enable the people of Worcester to make an informed decision about the source of their energy,” says Clean Energy Project Coordinator, Carissa Williams. “Clean energy products are available now and give Worcester the opportunity to directly support efforts to reduce air pollution, protect our health, and promote energy independence.”

Massachusetts Electric offers customers in Worcester, and throughout its service territory, the option to purchase and receive electricity produced from wind, water, solar power and biomass. These sources of power are considered clean and renewable, while coal and oil-fired power plants are the largest sources of air pollution, emitting smog and soot-forming pollutants, the neurotoxin mercury, and carbon dioxide that causes global warming. Consuming clean energy instead of energy produced by coal, oil, gas, and nuclear sources reduces harmful air pollution linked to a range of health problems, including increased asthma attacks and emergency room visits, reduced lung function, premature death, and brain damage in children, as well as reducing our dependence on foreign sources of oil.

“We’re all energy consumers,” notes Peggy Middaugh, Executive Director of the Regional Environmental Council. “Now people can choose to have their electricity generated from sustainable, non-polluting sources. Our goal over the next 10 months will be to reach as many consumers as possible to make sure they understand that choice and to encourage them to support clean energy”.

The REC and CWF will collaborate with other local organizations to host informational forums and distribute educational materials on clean energy technologies. They will also provide information on the benefits and availability of clean energy options to city councilors and leaders, making the case in support of the city purchase of clean energy for Worcester’s municipal operations.

“New Haven and other communities around New England have recently passed resolutions committing to purchase 20% of their electricity from clean, renewable sources by 2010,” said Cindy Luppi, Clean Water Fund Organizing Director. “Worcester has a great track record of leading the Commonwealth in common-sense solutions for complex problems – we hope that clean energy is next on the agenda.”

The REC and CWF will also raise awareness of new incentives recently announced by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) to support the clean energy. MTC’s new program, Clean Energy Choice, will give up to \$2 to your city and state for every \$1 you spend on purchasing clean energy. 1/2 of this money will go to your community to be used for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects; and the other 1/2 will be used for projects in low-income communities throughout Massachusetts.

MTC is the state’s development agency for renewable energy and the innovation economy, which is responsible for one-quarter of all jobs in the state. MTC brings together leaders from industry, academia, and government to advance technology-based solutions that lead to economic growth and a cleaner environment in Massachusetts. By developing energy from wind, solar, and other renewable resources, they reduce our reliance on coal, oil, and other fossil fuels that contribute to air pollution and global warming. Investments in the emerging clean energy market stimulate new economic activity in the renewable industry and job growth across Massachusetts.