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Pennsylvania Biomass Energy Association Holds First Meeting

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On Tuesday, the Pennsylvania Biomass Energy Association (PBEA) held its first meeting. The goal of the meeting, which had close to 50 attendees, was to introduce potential members to PBEA, formalize the organizational framework and strategic plan, and outline steps for moving forward. Topics discussed included membership, bylaws, proposed activities and focus areas, and the status of biomass activity in Pennsylvania.

PBEA is an industry-driven nonprofit association that will promote sustainable biomass use for heat and power applications and advocate for state and federal programs to support biomass thermal and power projects.

The PA Biomass Working Group and the Fuels for Schools Program have served as biomass outreach and education programs in Pennsylvania since 2001 and 2005, respectively. Both organizations focused their efforts on the use of biomass for thermal applications, and to a lesser extent, power generation. As a result, projects across the state have shown sustainable biomass can be used in a cost effective, environmentally responsible manner to provide heat in a broad array of applications from residential to community scale levels. At the same time, the Commonwealth has become home to a growing number of anaerobic digesters producing on-site electric generation from biogas. And the state is now witnessing the development of small scale and company specific biomass combined heat and power (CHP) projects and distributed generation projects.

In 2010, several PA Biomass Working Group participants began to discuss the need to reorganize the Working Group into an industry driven association that would serve Pennsylvania?s growing biomass heat and power industry. To meet the continuing need and interests from the industry, the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund provided financial and technical support to help create a formal statewide association, and has retained Pennsylvania Energy Resources Group to help plan and establish the association.

PBEA will center its activities on three broad focus areas:

- Sustainable Biomass Feedstocks,
- Technology and Project Development, and
- Outreach and Public Policy

The Pennsylvania Energy Resources Group, LLC is a government relations, public affairs, and strategic consulting firm servicing business, industry, trade and professional associations. In addition, they are the premier strategic consulting, project development, and public affairs firm in the Mid Atlantic region specializing in alternative energy projects. They provide clients with information, analyses, strategic services and solutions to support business development and expansion.

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