



A Program of the Maine Public Utilities Commission

Press Release

Maine High School Solar Grant To Prevent Boston Celtic Sized Poison Gas Emissions

June 4, 2008

GRAY, Maine – The Gray-New Gloucester High School was today presented with a \$36,450 Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund (VRRF) grant for the purchase and installation of solar panels which among other benefits will prevent annually the release of poisonous gases equivalent to the combined weight of current NBA finalists The Boston Celtics.

The Deputy Director State Energy Programs Tim Vrabel presented the VRRF grant certificate today at a ceremony at the school attended by local and state representatives, staff and students.

Vrabel said the solar panels will provide the school with 4,400 kilo watt hours of clean electricity each year but just as importantly, it will help in the fight against climate change by preventing the release of nearly 4,914 lbs of carbon dioxide and other poisonous gases into the atmosphere each year. To put that into perspective, that's the same weight as 24.57 Manny Ramirezes, and more than the total combined weight of the Boston Celtics.

The VRRF was established by the Maine Legislature in 2000 and is supported by voluntary contributions made by consumers on their electric bill. The Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which operates the VRRF, offers grants of up to \$50,000 to qualifying Maine-based nonprofits for the development of projects utilizing renewable resources.

Staff member Peter Reaman and his ecology class students spearheaded the grant application by The Gray-New Gloucester High School.

Vrables said the ecology students and Peter Reaman's "spirit of concern for Maine's environmental future" would hopefully be an inspiration and an example to not only other schools, but also the Maine population in general.

“I am very impressed by your school’s plans to provide workshops for district teachers on incorporating the project into the school curriculum. The enthusiasm of the staff and students of the Gray-New Gloucester High School for this project augurs well for the environmental future of Maine.

Ecology student Ian Brown said the school’s students were extremely grateful for the VRRF grant, as they were the generation that had to make the decision that the utilization of clean energy was the norm and not the exception.

For more information on the Voluntary Renewable Resource Fund, please contact Shirley Bartlett of the PUC at 287-3318 or Shirley.bartlett@maine.gov or visit the MPUC website - www.maine.gov/mpuc/

The Maine Public Utilities Commission is committed to ensuring that consumers have access to safe and reliable service for public utilities and that the rates for these utilities are just and reasonable. MPUC programs include Maine Enhanced 911 Service, Dig Safe, and Efficiency Maine.

To arrange an interview with Chairman Reishus, Commissioner Vendean Vafiades or Commissioner Jack Cashman, please contact Fred Bever at 207.287.6141 or by e-mail at fred.bever@maine.gov. The Commission’s website, www.maine.gov/mpuc/ may be accessed through the Maine School and Library Network at all public libraries in Maine.