Renewable Heating and Cooling Credits in Massachusetts for Thermal Sources (Biofuel & Wood Biomass) Under the Alternative Portfolio Standard (APS)

In 2014 the Massachusetts legislature enacted Chapter 251 of the Acts of 2014 authorizing the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) with developing regulations under the Alternative Portfolio Standard (APS), to include renewable thermal energy sources including liquid biofuels blended with home heating oil and hence provide a per-gallon renewable energy credit to retail heating oil marketers delivering biofuel blends to residential and commercial customers. There is currently no exact per gallon amount for the credit.

In May of 2016, DOER released the first draft of the regulations. MEMA coordinated a team of retailers, biofuel suppliers and others to assist the association in providing oral and written comments on the draft regulations.

In June of 2016, MEMA provided testimony at public hearings and in writing to DOER. Key comments on the first draft of regulations included:

- Lowering the biofuel blend levels to a range of B5 to B20. The initial draft regulations called for blends of B20 or higher.

- Correct the reference to only the ASTM B5 standard in the draft regulations and include the ASTM standard for B6-B20.

- Alter the definition of advanced biofuels to include all biofuel feed stocks currently being utilized by producers provided the feed stocks meet ASTM standards.

- Provide precise clarification on how retailers calculate biofuel blend levels and provide the necessary paperwork for filing for the credits.

- Provide guidance on the possibility of aggregating credits for all biofuel blends that can be demonstrated by retailers as long as the range of the blends is B5-B20.

MEMA awaits the release of a second draft of the regulations. The second draft is expected in January 2017. For more on the first draft of the regulations visit DOER's web site: