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# News Release

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For Immediate Release

## **Ground Breaking Held for PSNH Northern Wood Power Project**

### **New Renewable Energy Project Expected Operational in 2006**

Portsmouth, NH October 15, 2004\*\*\*\*A new era of renewable energy for New England will soon be ushered in, with the start of the construction of the Northern Wood Power Project, a plan by Public Service of New Hampshire (PSNH) to replace a coal-fired boiler with state-of-the-art technology that will burn wood chips and other clean wood products.

“New Hampshire will benefit from a dramatic reduction in air emissions, an estimated \$20 million boost to the local economy, and a new market for 400,000 tons of wood chips annually to boost the state and region’s forest industry,” said Gary Long, PSNH president and chief operating officer, at a groundbreaking ceremony held this morning at the site of the project, Schiller Station in Portsmouth. “It is my hope that, in the future, PSNH will be remembered as a pioneer in renewable energy generation.”

The Northern Wood Power Project includes the installation of a wood-fired boiler capable of producing 50 megawatts (MW) of energy, enough electricity to power about 50,000 homes. The new, high efficiency boiler will replace an existing 50-MW boiler, but at a much lower rate of emissions. PSNH estimates that the wood-fired boiler will result in a reduction of more than 380,000 tons of emissions annually. The cost of the project is estimated at \$70 - \$75 million.

Long was joined at the ceremony by some of the project's many partners and supporters, including NH Governor Craig Benson and US Senator John Sununu. Other guests included Bill Dunlap, of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests; Jasen Stock, Executive Director of the NH Timberland Owners Association; John Hynes, Councilor, City of Portsmouth; and, Chuck Shivery, Chairman, President and CEO of Northeast Utilities, PSNH's parent company.

Preparation for construction has already begun, and construction crews are expected to mobilize at the site by the end of the month. It is hoped that the Northern Wood Power Project will be online and generating renewable energy by the summer of 2006.

PSNH anticipates no increase in rates as a result of the project. The company's plan is to have new emerging markets for green and renewable energy essentially offset the cost. Both Massachusetts and Connecticut have viable markets for green power, and actually require that electricity suppliers in their states have renewable energy as part of their portfolios.

The project's clean-burning boiler meets strict efficiency and environmental standards for the renewable energy programs in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The Northern Wood Power Project has been certified by both states as a new, renewable energy source, enabling it to produce and sell "Renewable Energy Certificates" (RECs) to suppliers seeking to satisfy renewable energy requirements.

The addition of 50 megawatts of power produced through the burning of wood will further diversify the mix of power that PSNH produces itself. On average, the company currently produces about 75 percent of the energy its customers typically consume, from its own coal, oil, natural gas and hydro-electric plants.

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*PSNH is New Hampshire's largest electric utility, serving more than 460,000 homes and businesses.*