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**Heating Fuel Prices Drop But Winter Demand Looms Ahead**

Augusta, Maine – The Governor’s Office of Energy Independence and Security (OEIS) conducted its weekly heating fuel survey on Monday, December 12, 2011 and found that the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be **\$3.63 per gallon**, which is down \$0.01 from last week.

“The intense scrutiny of Europe’s economic situation is helping to keep crude oil prices steady,” said OEIS Director Ken Fletcher. “The warm start to the heating season has also kept household heating fuel demand and expenditures stable so far. According to the Energy Information Administration, average heating oil and propane expenditures are still expected to increase by 8 percent and five percent, respectively, over last winter.” Using this week’s average heating oil price and converting to a common heating unit value (million Btu) the price of fuel oil is at \$26.25. This compares with an equivalent heating unit value for natural gas of \$15.00 (at \$1.50/therm); propane, \$34.16 (at \$3.12/gallon); wood pellets, \$14.30 (at \$236/ton); and cord wood, \$11.25 (at \$225/cord). OEIS has included a calculator on its web site that will allow consumers to estimate home heating costs and price impacts of the various energy sources. See [http://www.maine.gov/oeis/docs/heatcalculatorMEv3\\_1.xls](http://www.maine.gov/oeis/docs/heatcalculatorMEv3_1.xls).

*As of December 12, 2011*

Heating Oil	Statewide	Southwest	Central	Eastern	Western	Northern
Average	3.63	3.58	3.67	3.66	3.53	3.79
High	3.85	3.80	3.80	3.75	3.70	3.85
Low	3.39	3.39	3.50	3.48	3.40	3.75
<b>Kerosene</b>	4.03	3.99	4.07	4.05	3.91	4.19
<b>Propane</b>	3.12					

It is important to note that the price for heating oil is a statewide average and that prices in a given geographic region of the state may be considerably higher or lower than the statewide average. Within the OEIS sample, the lowest actual heating oil price of \$3.39 per gallon can be found in the Southwest region. The highest price of \$3.85 per gallon was found in the Northern region. The statewide kerosene price average is \$4.03 per gallon at this time. The statewide average for propane **based on a use of 925 gallons a year** is \$3.12 per gallon. The table above provides current Maine cash prices in dollars rounded to the nearest penny. On December 12, the price of WTI crude oil, a major driver of refined petroleum product prices, including heating oil, was at \$97.82 per barrel.

Efficiency Maine links Maine homeowners and businesses with qualified, certified contractors who provide access to energy improvement options. For program details call 866-376-2463 or visit [www.energymaine.com](http://www.energymaine.com).