



Massachusetts Statewide Wood Energy Team



Why Choose Modern Wood Heat for Your Community?

Modern wood heat can help communities lower heating bills for public buildings, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and keep energy dollars in the local economy. At the same time, towns will be supporting markets for low-grade wood and helping their residents sustainably manage local woodlands.

Modern wood heat is versatile and convenient.

Modern wood heating systems can be scaled to heat one building (such as a town hall) or multiple buildings. Wood pellet and wood chip boilers are the most common modern wood heating systems for communities, due to their ease of use. These systems are controlled by a thermostat and will automatically respond to changes in heat demand. Wood fuel can be delivered in bulk and fed automatically into the boiler. For very small buildings, however, a manually fueled cordwood or pellet stove may be a more appropriate investment.

Modern wood heat systems minimize emissions.

Modern wood heating systems are engineered to comply with the latest EPA standards. Larger installations, such as wood chip boilers, may include pollution controls to meet state and federal clean air standards.

Wood is a renewable fuel.

Wood is a form of stored solar energy. Powered by the sun, a tree uses atmospheric carbon dioxide, as well as water and minerals, to produce the sugars that make up plant tissues, including wood. When a tree dies and rots, or is burned, the carbon in the wood is released back to the atmosphere where it can be recaptured by new growth. If the trees in a region accumulate and store carbon at a rate at least equal to the rate at which carbon is released, the processes offset each other.

Versatile

Convenient

Clean

Renewable

Efficient

Local

Affordable

Contact the SWET at 617-455-9918 or mwh-swet-ma@massforestalliance.org
for more information



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Modern wood heat systems are efficient.

Modern wood heating systems minimize heat loss when operated as designed. They are engineered to adjust heat output based on thermostat settings, while minimizing how often they fire. Community-scale systems may employ multiple boilers and thermal storage for higher efficiency. A backup heat source is often used to meet the sporadic heating needs of spring and fall, and to provide supplemental heat on the coldest days.

Good for the the local economy and forests.

Sixty-one percent of Massachusetts is forested, and most of our woodlands are owned by families and individuals. Landowners need to earn periodic income from their woods to pay property taxes and other expenses. When good markets for low-grade wood exist, landowners can offset the cost of woodland management by selling “energy” wood. Each heating dollar spent locally on wood fuel supports landowners, rural businesses, and local vendors as it is spent and re-spent. A far greater percentage of money spent on fossil fuels leaves the state.

Wood is Affordable.

Fossil fuel prices rise and fall dramatically in response to supply swings and world events, while prices for locally produced wood fuels, whether cordwood, chips, or pellets, tend to fluctuate much less. Over the life of a heating system, a town will save a lot of money on fuel costs with modern wood heat. Financial incentives, in the form of grants and rebates, are often available to help cities and towns reduce the initial cost of installing modern wood heating systems.

Wood Chips



Cordwood



Wood Pellets



Pellet Boilers/ U.S. Forest Service WERC

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