

# Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce Supports Seneca Renewable Energy

Posted Tuesday, March 31, 2009 by Public Policy Team

The Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce supports sustainability and the City of Eugene's goals of making our community a prominent home to leading sustainable businesses.

In this vein, the Chamber enthusiastically supports Seneca Renewable Energy's proposed biomass cogeneration facility. The Chamber believes this is a chance to take local sustainability efforts to the next level, and capitalize on current opportunities to grow our local economy.

Our Mayor and City Council have strongly advocated for sustainability and the potential for increased efficiency and reduced waste to pay dividends to Eugene area businesses. With support from the City Council, Mayor Piercy launched the Sustainable Business Initiative (SBI) with the goal of making Eugene one of the most sustainable mid-sized cities by the year 2020.

In the 2006 report to the City Council, The Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force's "Vision of a Sustainable Eugene" calls for a scenario in which Eugene would be home to businesses that "have become so efficient in their use of energy and generating their own renewable energy that many are net energy producers that sell surplus power back to local utilities for redistribution to other citizens." Community decisions would "result in reduced vehicle miles traveled, reduced energy consumption, and reduced reliance on fossil fuels." The Seneca Renewable Energy facility will help make this vision a reality.

The Sustainable Business Initiative calls for a "triple bottom line" for businesses and governments that accounts for environmental and social impacts in addition to the traditional economic bottom line. The new Seneca facility will put local contractors and their employees to work during these difficult economic times, as well as create permanent, family-wage jobs for area residents. Seneca will use wood byproducts, 100% of which will be supplied by their existing operations, to power their dry kiln and produce nearly 20 megawatts of electricity, while using best available control technology to meet and exceed emissions standards.

By creating family-wage jobs, producing clean power and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, and generating a profit, Seneca's cogeneration facility fits the "people, planet, profit" model for sustainable business. The Chamber is excited to have a project of this scope occurring locally, hiring local employees and construction companies, and holding the potential to sell the produced electricity to EWEB.

The Eugene Chamber of Commerce welcomes Seneca's contribution to local sustainability efforts, because it will contribute to our shared goal of building a healthy local economy, and a healthy, vibrant community.

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Please contact the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) at LRAPA Permit Coordinator, 1010 Main Street, Springfield, Oregon 97477 or E-Mail: [colleen@lrpa.org](mailto:colleen@lrpa.org) and the Eugene Water and Electric Board here: <http://www.eweb.org/ContactUs.aspx?id=20> to let them know you support Seneca's cogeneration facility, and clean, homegrown energy.