

## **Update on Ketchikan Biomass Boiler Project**

Ketchikan, Alaska – U.S. Senator Mark Begich, U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Regional Administrator George Northcroft, and other officials will discuss the growing biomass industry in southeast Alaska, and tour GSA's project to install a new biomass boiler at the Ketchikan Federal Building on Friday, August 5th at 4:00 pm.

Funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, GSA is replacing the building's current outdated, inefficient system which has reached the end of its useful life with a sustainable biomass boiler run on a renewable resource – wood pellets. The agency seeks to be a green proving-ground for energy efficient products and services that will save money for the taxpayer, reduce the government's carbon footprint, and support jobs in the clean energy economy.

GSA began construction earlier this year at the historic federal building, and the project is slated for completion in October 2011. Designs for the new project will ensure preservation of historic aspects of the building, whose salmon-pink paint scheme has made the property a landmark in downtown Ketchikan. The building is located adjacent to the Stedman-Thomas Historic District.

GSA joins a growing list of Southeast Alaska companies and agencies exploring biomass technology. Friday's event will include a panel discussion with other organizations considering or implementing biomass systems, including:

- Dave Carlson, CEO, Southeast Alaska Power Agency
- Forrest Cole, Forest Supervisor, United States Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
- Rick Harris, Executive Vice President, Sealaska Corporation
- Captain Adam Shaw, United States Coast Guard

Biomass boilers produce heat with wood pellets or chips instead of oil, reducing heating costs

and the use of fossil fuels. The Ketchikan project is GSA's first pilot of a commercial biomass boiler and the agency will study the project closely to learn about other federal applications. As is standard policy in GSA-owned and operated buildings, the Ketchikan boiler will be paired with a secondary oil boiler, to ensure a back-up heating source in the event of unexpected maintenance or repair problems.

This \$4.7 million contract was awarded to Southwest Construction, a small, woman-owned business with operations in Anchorage.

Members of the public are invited to attend.

Date: Friday, August 5, 2011

Time: 4:00pm

Place: Ketchikan U.S. Federal Building

648 Mission Street – 5th Floor Courtroom

### **Source of News:**

- U.S. General Services Administration
- [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

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