

Massachusetts sets temporary renewable target

The US state of Massachusetts has enacted temporary regulations requiring utilities to generate more electricity from renewable sources. The new regulations enforce key provisions of a law that requires the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard to be in place by 1 January 2009. The state's department of energy needs to hold a public hearing on the RPS before it can finalise regulations. It enacted the emergency regulations, which will be in effect for three months, to give it time to hold a hearing and receive public comment. In July 2008, Massachusetts passed a law requiring its RPS to grow one per cent beyond the previous standard of four per cent in 2009. Renewable energy must account for 15 per cent of electricity generation by 2020 and 25 per cent by 2030 under the law. The state's RPS is slightly less ambitious than President elect Barack Obama's nationwide proposal requiring 25 per cent of electricity in the US to come from renewable energy by 2025. California has the nation's most ambitious RPS, requiring utilities to generate 33 per cent of their electricity from sustainable energy sources by 2020. In Massachusetts, utilities can buy renewable energy certificates or pay a fee of US\$58.58 per megawatt hour of their RPS obligation to comply with the regulations. State regulations also aim to keep older renewable energy facilities operating by requiring utilities to buy renewable energy certificates from these facilities equal to at least 3.6 per cent of their electricity sales.

Source: essa news Issue 1, 12 January 2009