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Commissioner

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Press Release

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State Agencies Partner to Provide Job Training and Reduce Energy Costs

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—The Department of Labor and Workforce Development partnered with Alaska Energy Authority to provide Alaskans with hands-on Cordwood Boiler Operator Training. Alaskans from seven communities successfully completed the training held this month to learn how to operate wood-fired biomass boilers. Participants traveled from Tetlin, Tanacross, Kobuk, Hughes, Koyukuk, Holy Cross, and Anvik to Tanana for the training, which will ensure local expertise is available to operate and maintain the generators.

“Connecting Alaskans with job training is one of our core missions,” said Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner Heidi Drygas. “These biomass systems will not only help rural communities save energy costs, they will also provide a boost to local economies through the employment opportunities they offer.”

Biomass systems supply heat to public buildings, water treatment plants, and city and tribal buildings in many Alaska communities. This innovative training brought together industry experts, regional partners, and biomass operators from across the state to provide in-depth training on the operations and maintenance of cordwood biomass systems.

“The Alaska Energy Authority is committed to reducing the cost of energy in Alaska,” said Sara Fisher-Goad, executive director of Alaska Energy Authority. “Biomass is an important component of our portfolio of technologies to help provide stable and affordable energy in many Alaska communities. We’re proud of the partnership with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development to make sure that Alaskans have the tools to effectively maintain and operate these energy systems.”

The program included support from the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Tanana Chiefs Conference, the City of Tanana, the Native Village of Tanana, and Alaska Heat Technologies, Dectra Corporation.

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