



American Lung Association  
of Massachusetts

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**Improving Life,  
One Breath at a Time®**

Founded in 1904, the American Lung Association of Massachusetts works to fight lung disease through education, advocacy, and medical research.

July 14, 2006

Dear Editor:

The American Lung Association of Massachusetts has serious concerns about the proposed Biomass Power Plant in Russell, Massachusetts because of the significant impact of this project on air quality. The health of area residents and those in surrounding communities could be adversely affected by thousands of pounds of air pollutants emitted into the air daily, including nitrogen oxide or NOx. NOx is a key component of ground level ozone, or smog, and is a lung irritant. In the report that Russell Biomass filed with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office, Russell Biomass LLC projected that the power plant's NOx levels would exceed the Federal EPA Limit for New Source Review in an Ozone Non-Attainment Area. Under current regulations, the plant would be allowed to purchase additional credits to produce the extra NOx. The reported emissions also do not include the particulate matter produced by over 800 one-way diesel truck trips serving the plant each week.

In the American Lung Association's 2005 *State of the Air* report, Hampden and Hampshire counties both received a grade of "F" for both ozone and particle pollution. The health effects of ozone and particle pollution include wheezing, shortness of breath, increased risk of asthma attacks, pulmonary inflammation, and premature mortality.<sup>1</sup> We have serious concerns that this proposed plant could worsen the air quality in the already polluted Pioneer Valley.

The mission of the American Lung Association of Massachusetts is to prevent lung disease and promote lung health. The proposed Russell Biomass power plant is a potential health threat to thousands of Massachusetts' residents and requires the full attention of all Massachusetts' citizens. Information about air pollution and its health effects can be found at [www.lungma.org](http://www.lungma.org), and information about the power plant can be obtained from the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act Office (MEPA) at <http://www.mass.gov/envir/mepa/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey E. Seyler".

Jeffrey E. Seyler  
Chief Executive Officer