



## VISIONS 2008 Conference to Confront Most Pressing Issues Facing Oilheat Dealers and Fuel Marketplace

BOSTON, MA — The one conference dedicated to learning and planning for the future of heating oil operations and the diversified home energy business will land in Boston this September 9 and 10 with an intensive classroom approach to covering the most demanding finance, operations, information and productivity needs of the nation's heating oil and propane delivery firms. Advance events on Monday, September 8, include a National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) board of directors meeting and scheduled biodiesel plant tour.

VISIONS 2008 will focus on the challenges faced by fuel dealers, many brought on by the rapid escalation in energy costs and commodities at large. The aim to maintain profits with declining household volume resulting from conservation and the introduction of highly efficient heating and accessory systems will receive considerable attention, as will the emphasis on new markets and diversified opportunities for companies open to transforming themselves into total HVAC and home service providers.

New to this year's VISIONS conference will be a four-track program, each track being coordinated by an active, successful, and noteworthy professional within and serving the fuel industry. Timely and unique keynote presentations will lead to classroom breakout sessions for the respective tracks.

Steve Abbate, Market Development Executive with Griffith Energy Services, Inc., based in Columbia, Md., heads a track dealing with breaking bad business habits and defining the new realities that now exist. Classes are planned for creating a new business plan, identifying how higher fuel costs affect profitability and reducing operating expenses through proven techniques. Presentations by professional managers, CPAs, and successful peers will provide substantial relevancy to the topics presented.

On the financial front, proven ways to stay ahead of the cash flow curve, the importance of good software and proper accounting and getting "value" to work for profits will receive attention. This track is being organized by Jim Townsend, Townsend Oil, Danvers, Mass. Jim is also the most recent past Chairman for the National Oilheat Research Alliance.

Rich Larkin, President of Hedge Solutions, Inc., of Manchester, N.H., one of the industry's most called upon resources for hedging counsel and fuel buying strategies, heads the team addressing the driving forces behind high prices, critical fuel purchase hedging, and discussion of acquisitions and buyouts and legal language for dealer-to-end-user contracts.

Finally, for a widely anticipated "business diversification" track, Richard Goldberg, head of Warm Thoughts Communications, of Secaucus, N.J., has arranged for experts in their respective fields to educate company executives and managers about "owning the house" with respect to offering a wider array of HVAC, comfort, and lifestyle services than may now be the case. Customer behavior, Internet technology, and software that can boost system sales will receive attention. This includes the new, highly recommended NORA "Fuel Savings Calculator" that enables a company representative to compute and display on a laptop computer the fuel savings achievable with a new heating system under different upgrade scenarios.

To attend the Boston conference, please visit [www.VISIONS2008.org](http://www.VISIONS2008.org). A 60-second video tour and online registration procedure are on the site. VISIONS 2008 provides access to consulting professionals whose individual time, advice, and instruction for a day would cost far more than the registration fees — \$295 for the first person per company, \$195 for each additional person from the same company.

VISIONS 2008 will be held at the Hilton Hotel at Boston's Logan Airport, making air travel convenient for those attending from out of the region. Advance hotel bookings can be obtained at a discount by referencing NEFI or the Visions Conference when contacting the hotel. (1-800-HILTONS or <http://www.hiltonfamilyboston.com/hilton-boston-logan-airport.php>.) (Rooms have been pre-booked for the discount by New England Fuel Institute.) A NORA Board of Directors meeting, PMAA Heating Oil Division meeting and state association meetings are scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2008, the day before the conference. Also look for announcement of a Bioheat® tour at a local supplier and evening event.

Information for companies wishing to sponsor and/or exhibit at VISIONS 2008 is available at [www.VISIONS2008.org](http://www.VISIONS2008.org) or from Tracy Goodwin at [tracy@nefi.com](mailto:tracy@nefi.com) or (617-923-5015).