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Maryland Clean Energy Industry Adding Green Jobs in 2012 Despite Slow Economy

*Industry survey finds businesses planning to expand, say Maryland is ideal
environment for clean energy businesses*

Rockville, MD – Maryland's clean energy industry is economically strong and is expected to create new green collar jobs in 2012, even though uncertainty about government policy represents a significant barrier to continued success. These findings are a result of the 2012 Maryland Clean Energy Industry Survey, conducted by the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC).

Significant economic impact

The clean energy industry represents a significant economic interest for Maryland. Nearly 40 percent of surveyed businesses reported more than \$1 million in revenue in 2011, while 27 percent made less than \$100,000 in revenue.

But beyond revenue, the clean energy industry is growing green collar jobs. Almost half of surveyed businesses expect to employ more workers in 2012 compared to 2011, and an additional third said they will employ the same number of workers in 2012 as in 2011. Nearly three-quarters of businesses employed 25 or fewer workers in 2011, but nearly 13 percent employed more than 100 workers.

"Maryland's clean energy industry is a significant bright spot in this state's economy," said Kathy Magruder, MCEC Executive Director. "Despite the overall national recession, our green economy is strong and growing fast."

State of the industry

Maryland represents an ideal environment for businesses in the clean energy industry. Two-thirds of surveyed businesses said the state's clean energy industry was either very strong or fairly strong, and 23 percent said the state's clean energy industry was better than other states.

Renewables, energy efficiency, and consumer-focused sales dominate the state's clean energy industry. 35 percent of surveyed businesses are in renewable energy technology, and 27 percent are in energy efficiency technology.

Consumers are the largest audience for businesses in Maryland's clean energy industry – nearly 80 percent said homeowner or business consumers are their primary customers. Roughly 15 percent said government or the military are their primary customers.



Clear policy imperatives

While Maryland's policies and incentives have helped the state's clean energy industry to grow, uncertainty about the future of those policies could limit further expansion. Nearly 55 percent of all respondents said Maryland's state and local policy and tax incentives have led to expansion of their business. But, around 80 percent of surveyed businesses cited uncertain policy at the federal, state, or local level as the biggest barrier to their success.

Continuing the theme of a strong green-collar workforce, only 13 percent of surveyed businesses said lack of a skilled workforce was a barrier to their success.

Expansion of the renewable energy targets is the most important issue for Maryland's clean energy industry. 48 percent of all surveyed businesses want to see the state's renewable energy portfolio standard increased.

Even though an uncertain policy environment threatens continued growth of the clean energy industry, and expanding the state's RPS was identified as a top priority of those surveyed, 58 percent of respondents said they have not met with their state delegate or senator on policy issues. Business owners may need to be even more engaged in direct government outreach to insure growth continues in the future.

Opportunity for competitive electricity suppliers

The survey also indicates an opportunity for suppliers in Maryland's competitive electricity market. Almost all surveyed businesses were aware of their ability to shop for a competitive electricity supplier. However, 66 percent of surveyed businesses are aware of Maryland's competitive electricity market, but have either chosen to remain with their incumbent utility or have not yet shopped for a competitive electricity supplier.

About the survey

The online survey polled 179 businesses registered with the MCEC between May 1 and June 15, 2012 to benchmark the state of the clean energy industry, determine policy imperatives, and hone advocacy efforts for the MCEC moving forward.

More than three-quarters of surveyed businesses are headquartered or based in Maryland, and 17 percent either employed workers in the state or have state locations.

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The Maryland Clean Energy Center was created in 2008 to help transform the state's energy economy with programs that catalyze the growth of business, increase green collar jobs, and make clean energy technologies, products, and services affordable and accessible for Maryland residents. More details are online at www.mdcleanenergy.org