

NRCM Key points for Portland City Council on Tar Sands Purchasing Policy

- **NRCM strongly supports the adoption of this purchasing policy, which will help make city government more sustainable.** We support all of the provisions in the policy but want to emphasize our support for the provision to not buy fuel from tar sands oil.
 - And Portland residents feel the same way. Nearly 2,500 signed a petition to you supporting this policy. Just a few of them are here tonight to be recognized. Since not all are here to speak, I'd like to ask everyone here who supports this resolution to just stand up for one moment for the Council to take note...
- Tar sands has been called the dirtiest form of oil on the planet for several reasons:
 - The extraction of tar sands in Alberta destroys forests and pollutes air and water, creating toxic hazards for local populations and North American wildlife.
 - As a result of the highly energy-intensive processes involved to extract and produce tar sands oil, it results in much greater global warming pollution—in fact, significant increases in the use of dirty tar sands oil could make it impossible to address climate change and avoid irreversible damaging levels of change.
 - Tar sands pipelines have been shown to spill or leak at three times the rate of conventional oil pipelines.
 - When shipped through pipelines, tar sands oil – or diluted bitumen – is filled with dangerous toxic chemicals; and it is so thick and heavy that it is nearly impossible to clean up when it spills.
- **While tar sands is one of the dirtiest sources of energy available, the City and citizens of Portland pride themselves on charting a course for increasing sustainability.** Thanks to leadership from many directions, including this City Council, the city has taken multiple actions to reduce its environmental footprint. You have invested in energy efficiency and sustainable transportation, and you have measured your carbon footprint and are striving to reduce it.
- Portland is a desirable place to live and work and run a business not in spite of its greenness, but *because* of its greenness. **Sustainability is part of what makes the city great.**
- **It would be absolutely contrary to those actions and that profile for Portland to use oil or gasoline derived from tar sands.** Portland and tar sands are simply incompatible.
- Large consumers of oil, from companies to cities, are beginning to recognize that by adopting policies much like this one they can decrease the demand for dirty sources of energy like tar sands.

- Implementation of this policy will be very important, and City staff have already engaged with various experts so they know what they need to make it work. **What it is important tonight is that the City's elected officials set the overall policy course to ensure the city remain committed to sustainability by rejecting oil from dirty tar sands.**
- Finally, many of us are very concerned about the prospect of a tar sands pipeline through Maine ending at Casco Bay. However, I want to point out that although the pipeline plan has brought our attention to tar sands, we would urge the City to adopt this policy even if not for this particular pipeline. **That's because tar sands is simply a toxic, destructive, and polluting form of energy that should have no place in Maine, whether it is piped through our back yards or someone else's'.**