

# Wood Energy use in the northeast U.S.

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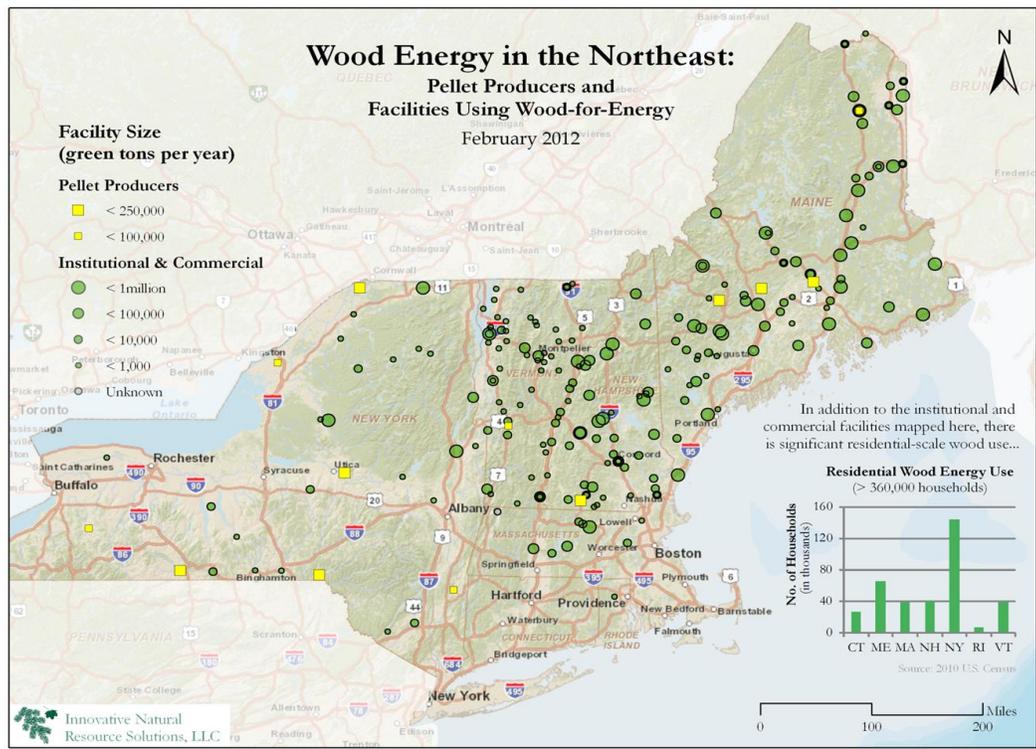
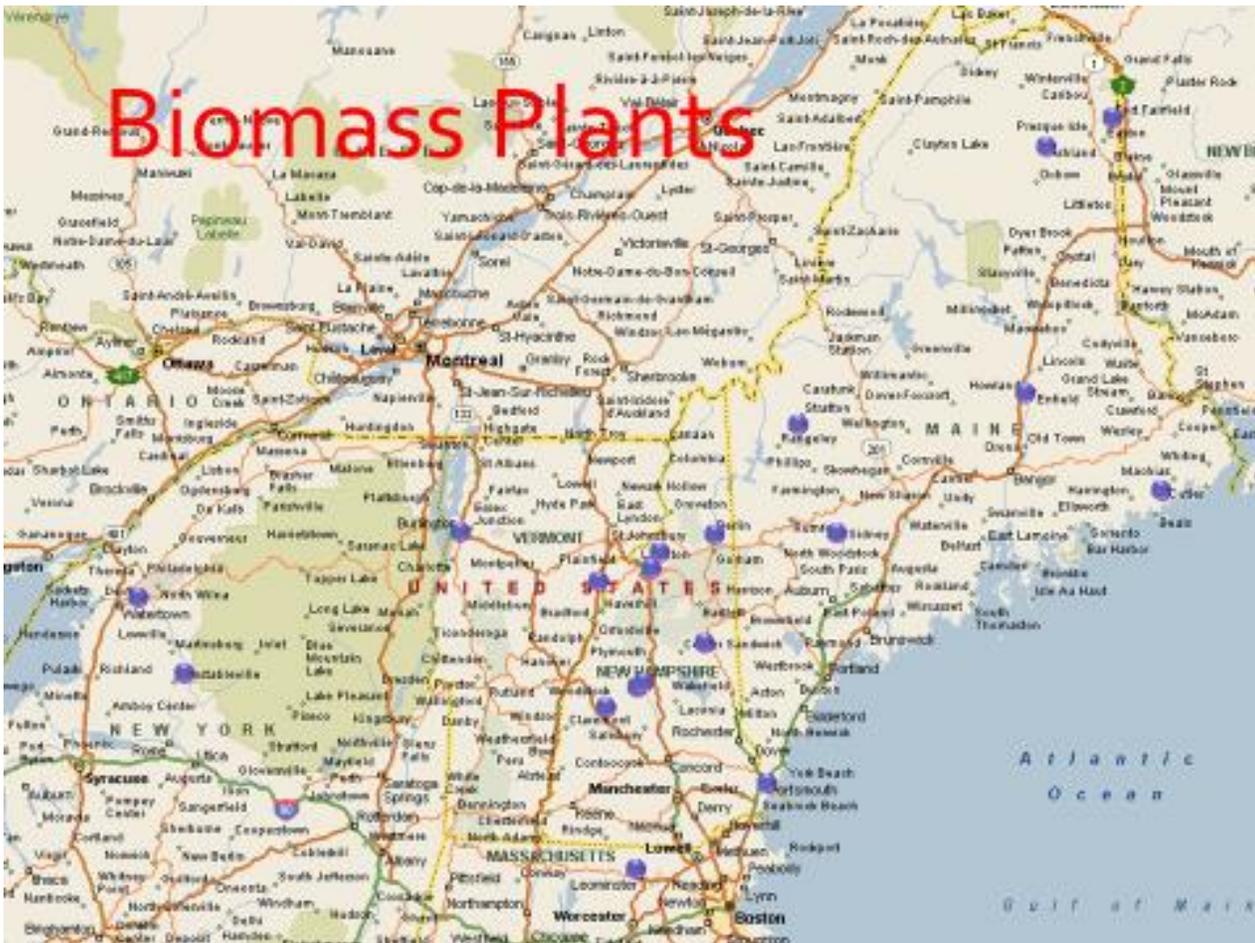
Wood as a feedstock for energy use in the northeast goes back hundreds of years with the use of firewood to heat buildings. Even today, traditional firewood use in tens of thousands of homes across New York and New England is over 5 million tons of wood per year. A lot is still burned in traditional wood stoves but some is burned in modern heating appliances such as cordwood gasifier boilers.

States with highest percentage increase in homes using wood as main heating source (2005-12)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 and 2012 American Community Survey  
Note: Northeast states represent the Northeast Census region

Large scale use of wood feedstock to generate electricity and for process steam began in the pulp and paper mills in the 1960s and 70s but the federal **Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA)** of 1978, passed in response to the early 1970s energy crisis in the US, provided the incentive to build over a dozen stand-alone wood-fired power plants in the region in the 1980s. The current 19 biomass electricity plants use nearly 5 million tons of wood fuel annually.



**Wood Heat**

Commercial/institutional wood chips or pellets – 500+

Residential wood pellets (stoves, boilers and furnaces) – thousands

Wood stoves – tens of thousands