

For Immediate Release

“UW-Extension Kicks Off Energy Conservation Outreach Project”

(Appleton) The bright idea light bulb symbol may change to a compact fluorescent light (CFL), if Outagamie County University of Wisconsin-Extension’s latest endeavor is successful. The group has received an internal \$5,000 grant from the UW-Extension administrative district within which it resides, in order to create consumer awareness and behavior change related to energy efficiency of buildings.

To get households and other consumers started in energy conservation for buildings, the Extension office is offering to exchange a free CFL for a working incandescent light bulb, to owners of residential, business, farm and nonprofit buildings. UW-Extension is also offering the free publication “In-home Energy Audit Tips To Save You Money”, and cash back coupons from Wisconsin Focus on Energy for purchase of additional CFL’s .

The conservation outreach project targets Northwest Outagamie County, as a relatively underserved area. Included are the villages of Bear Creek, Black Creek, Nichols & Shiocton plus the Towns of Black Creek, Deer Creek and Maple Creek .

“By focusing on a compact geographic area, we hope to see greater adoption of conservation measures than would result from a scatter-gun approach”, said project co-organizer Jim Resick of UW-Extension.

“We aim to help reduce energy consumption in these communities, most importantly to save consumers some money that will in turn circulate in the local economy. But, we also see this project as supporting the state goals of having more energy-independent communities and reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” he said.

Resick continued that UW-Extension aims to use community outreach and education, in order to encourage greater use of energy efficiency measures and to lower consumption of electricity and heating fuel. The grant supported the part-time, short-term hiring of Energy Outreach Coordinator Mellissa Hansen of Kaukauna, who will coordinate and deliver these activities.

The project sponsors point out that simple, low-cost and no-cost measures can produce large energy savings. They hope adoption of such simple measures will lead to later interest by consumers in more involved or costly conservation projects – all of which pay for themselves over a relatively short timeframe.

Project partners WE-Energies, Franklin Energy, and Focus on Energy offer technical assistance and financial incentives for many conservation investments. Franklin Energy and Focus on Energy offer to help identify renovation or replacement options, by conducting energy conservation assessments at no charge for small business, farm, apartment, local government, and nonprofit buildings.

A first “Green Blitz” with these consumer segments is planned for mid-August. Most single-family residences are not eligible for free energy audits, but lists of contractors who conduct such audits will be made available to householders.

UW-Extension can refer lower-income households – that may be eligible for free energy audits or subsidized renovation – to additional project partners at Outagamie County Housing Authority and Rebuilding Together of the Fox Valley.

For more information or to request a light bulb exchange (for buildings in target area only), contact Mellissa Hansen at 920-841-7521 or call the Outagamie County UW-Extension office at 920-832-5122.

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For more: Small Businesses: Jim Resick, 920-832-5122

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