

Press Release



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Washington Academy Aces Energy Lesson

Volleyball Team Thought Gym Had Been Painted Once New Energy-Efficient Lighting Was Installed!

Augusta, Maine (November 28, 2005) Armed with clipboards and sharp #2 pencils, students of Mr. Spranger's environmental science class scoured Washington Academy in search of energy leaks. While students took part in a mock energy audit that served as a classroom lesson, administrators participated in an energy audit last spring conducted by Energy Management Consultants.

The audit identified several areas for improvement and the Academy administrators connected with the Efficiency Maine Business Program (EMBP) to develop solutions. The Machias school received cash incentives from Efficiency Maine totaling \$10,968 once the approved, energy-efficient electric equipment was installed.

Jeff Hanson, president of Energy Management Consultants, the company that installed the lighting, projected that the Academy will reduce its electric bill by \$17,366 over the course of the coming year as a result of these upgrades. Based on the September and October 2005 electric bills, the Academy is right on track.

"It all came down to dollars and cents," stated Dave Hitchings, Assistant Headmaster for Washington Academy. "In the first two months, we reported a \$2,600 decrease in our electric bill. This made good business and environmental sense."

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Energy-efficient lighting represented the bulk of the projects with more than 700 energy-efficient light fixtures and bulbs installed throughout the academy. When the new, energy-efficient T5 lights were turned on in the gymnasium, the volleyball team thought the room had been painted because the new lighting removed shadows created by the old lighting, according to Assistant Headmaster Hitchings.

The Academy installed VendingMisers[®] on the vending machines, which are plug-in devices that make machines “go to sleep” when not in use, but still keep beverages cold. Other improvements included installing energy-efficient exit lights that glow a cool green color in hallways and at exit doors, as well as T5 lighting in the cafeteria.

Washington Academy administrators are very pleased with the return on investment to date, and deem this move a positive step in taking control of energy costs.

Schools, businesses, nonprofits, farms and wastewater facilities can participate in the Efficiency Maine program. Information about the program and types of electricity-saving devices are available online at www.energymaine.com or by calling toll-free, 1-866-376-2463.

Efficiency Maine is a statewide effort to promote the more efficient use of electricity, help Maine residents and businesses reduce energy costs, and improve Maine’s environment. Efficiency Maine is funded by electricity consumers and administered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission.