

Press Release



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A Division of the Maine Public Utilities Commission

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Maine Schools Earn Extra Credit For Energy Saving Measures

27 Public and Private Schools, (K-12) have received \$161,000+ in cash incentives

Augusta, Maine (January 18, 2006) Unpredictable energy costs occupy news headlines and remain a point of concern as Maine businesses and nonprofits balance tight budgets. Twenty-seven Maine schools are reaping electric savings today due to their participation in the Efficiency Maine Business Program, which is administered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

Since 2003 when the program began, 27 public and private schools, (K-12) have received \$161,006.20 in cash incentives from the Efficiency Maine Business Program (EMBP). By installing the approved electric equipment, these 27 participating schools saved 1,242,359 in kilowatt-hours, enough energy to light 767 classrooms for an entire year.

“By saving on energy costs, our Maine schools can invest more in students and help the environment, earning them straight A’s,” said Kurt Adams, chairman of the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

“The Efficiency Maine Business Program is the resource administrators can look to for energy solutions.”

The dollars schools save from energy efficient electric installations can help offset the rising cost of gasoline and heating oil.

“Energy efficiency is an investment, and we invite schools to research the benefits, both short and long term, of the Efficiency Maine Business Program,” remarked Linda Viens, program manager with the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

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Portland Public Schools are starting the new year off with VendingMisers™ attached to all 39 of the system's vending machines. VendingMisers are plug-in devices that cycle a vending machine on and off, depending upon usage, while maintaining proper product temperature. This technology could save the system an estimated \$7,000 a year in electric costs.

“With increasing fuel costs, we are working hard to find ways to stretch our energy dollars,” said Bill Verrill, director of food services. “The timing for this investment was right because of these pressures and because we were able to take advantage of Efficiency Maine’s incentives, which made the project possible.”

Washington Academy, a private high school in Washington County, underwent an energy audit last spring and identified several areas needing improvement. This fall the school received cash incentives totaling \$10,968 from EMBP once the approved, energy efficient electric equipment was installed. Since September, the Academy reports monthly electric bill savings of \$1,300, according to Assistant Headmaster Dave Hitchings.

In northern Maine, three of Fort Fairfield’s schools became more energy efficient due to Jim Everett, the system’s physical plant supervisor. Everett learned how facilities could become more energy efficient by attending an Efficiency Maine Building Operator Certification course. Following that, he initiated projects that included new T8 light systems, energy efficient exit lights and VendingMisers. The schools received \$13,503 in cash incentives from EMBP.

Mount Merici School in Waterville completed four energy efficient installations over the past three years, receiving \$1,950 in cash incentives from EMBP. Students particularly welcome improved lighting in the gymnasium, reports Susan Cote, principal.

Schools can learn more about the program and types of electricity-saving devices by contacting Efficiency Maine Business Program 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.