

Maine Public Utilities Commission



For Immediate Release

Governor Switches on New Era in LED Lights.

New Gloucester, ME – Monday, October 20, 2008 – Maine Governor John Baldacci tonight flicked the switch on a new era of LED public lighting which will lead to dramatic energy savings and a reduction in light pollution.

The ceremonial light switching held at the campus of Pineland Farms in New Gloucester Maine, turned on over 200 streetlights that have been retrofitted with a pioneering new Light-Emitting Diode (LED) system engineered by Osram Sylvania.

It was the first significant installation of the product in the country and the pilot project was made possible with help from a \$41,000 incentive from Efficiency Maine, a program of the Maine Public Utilities Commission. Efficiency Maine is a statewide effort to promote more efficient use of electricity, help Maine residents and businesses reduce energy costs, and improve Maine's environment.

This retrofit project is predicted to save Pineland Farms an estimated 85 percent in outdoor lighting costs, about \$30,000 dollars a year. There is a two-and-a-half-year pay back time on the purchase and installation costs of the retrofit.

The new lights also will cut down on light pollution. They have been designed to deliver light only where needed, minimizing light trespass and disruption to Pineland Farm's neighbors.

It is a forward-thinking solution for institutions like Pineland Farms that wish to convert their existing street lighting system to an environmentally preferable system, which can also offer substantial energy savings and dramatic improvements in light quality.

Sharon M. Reishus, Chairman of the Maine Public Utilities Commission, said that when Pineland and Sylvania asked Efficiency Maine about financial assistance in creating a prototype project for park-light LEDs, they and Efficiency Maine staff worked hard to make sure the project would meet the program's cost-effectiveness standards.

"The result of this partnership is an exciting example of cutting-edge technology that can help create a brighter and more energy efficient future for all of us," she said.

Governor Baldacci said the partnership between Pineland Farms, Efficiency Maine and Sylvania Osram was an example of the type of the kind of collaboration that would lead Maine and the country to better energy solutions.

"Government cannot accomplish energy independence and security alone; instead, it takes just this kind of partnership we see today," he said.

"We know change is not easy, but the improvements we make today are too important to put off any longer."

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