



..... for immediate release .....

*Media Contacts:* Jennifer Dryburgh Neighbors /  
Tim Wirtz  
Hoffman York  
414-225-9535 / 414-225-9522  
jneighbors@hyc.com /  
twirtz@hyc.com

.....

## **Focus on Energy Helps Wisconsin Residents Cut Energy Costs By \$20.2 Million**

**MADISON, Wis.** (August 9, 2004) – Wisconsin residents save more than \$20.2 million in energy costs every year, thanks to energy efficiency improvements made with the help of Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s statewide energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative. Over their lifetime, these improvements will save state residents nearly \$134.2 million in energy costs (in today’s dollars) while helping protect Wisconsin’s environment and fueling economic development statewide.

Through its programs for residential energy users, Focus on Energy has helped Wisconsinites implement a broad range of energy-saving measures, from installing ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances and lighting to upgrading insulation, water heaters, and heating and cooling systems; from building new homes that are certified to surpass even national guidelines for building performance, to installing renewable energy systems.

“The average Wisconsin household spends \$1,400 every year on utility bills,” said Janet Brandt, program director for Focus on Energy’s Residential programs. “By participating in Focus on Energy’s programs, state residents can learn how to make smarter energy decisions that can lower their energy costs by about one third without sacrificing features or style. At the same time, their homes will be more comfortable, safe and durable.”

Wisconsin businesses benefit, too. Builders, contractors and retailers statewide have seen their businesses grow in response to increasing demand for energy efficient products and homes. Since July 2001, Focus on Energy’s residential programs have increased state businesses’ yearly sales by more than \$64.6 million and created the equivalent of 885 new full-time jobs.

- more -

### **Focus on Energy's Residential Programs**

Focus on Energy's broad range of residential programs are designed to help residents save energy and money, whether they are building a new home, remodeling an existing home, managing an apartment or condominium building or are purchasing new lighting or appliances for their residence. These services are offered through a suite of residential programs:

- **ENERGY STAR Products** helps consumers make smart energy choices when purchasing such products as lighting, appliances, home electronics and home office equipment.
- **Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes** gives buyers of new homes the confidence that their new home surpasses national standards for performance and energy efficiency.
- **Home Performance with ENERGY STAR** helps consumers make their existing home more comfortable, safe, durable and energy efficient.
- **Apartment & Condo Efficiency Services** helps residents of apartments and condominiums keep their homes comfortable and their energy bills low, and helps building owners reduce energy and maintenance costs and improve resident satisfaction.
- **Residential Renewable Energy** helps homeowners harness energy from the sun or wind to heat and power their homes.

### **Residential Program Successes**

Employees of the City of Madison and Dane County celebrated Earth Day 2004 by buying more than 4,500 ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) at a Focus on Energy-sponsored sale at the City-County Building in Madison. The bulbs will save purchasers nearly \$135,000 in energy costs (based on the lifetime of the bulbs), conserve enough electricity each year to light 30 average Wisconsin homes and annually prevent 712,800 pounds of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere each year.

More than 3,000 Wisconsin ENERGY STAR Homes have been built by over 500 builder partners statewide since the program's inception in 1999. Together, these homes save enough electricity each year to light an additional 300 Wisconsin homes. Each home also prevents 4,500 pounds of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere each year.

- more -

Chippewa Falls, Wis.-based Balts Construction found the home evaluations conducted by Home Performance with ENERGY STAR consultants to be so valuable that it now includes the service with any job estimated at \$2,000 or more. The independent third-party evaluation provides credibility and, in some cases, uncovers previously-undetected sources of drafts, excess moisture, poor air quality and high heating and cooling bills. When the consultant finds opportunities to improve the home's performance, Balts is often asked to bid on the project, helping fuel the company's more than 60 percent growth over the past 18 months.

Gregory and Elaine Stark of Edgar, Wis. recently installed a grid-connected solar electric system at their home to reduce their energy consumption and become more energy independent. The system is expected to generate 6,289 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity each year and reduce the Starks' annual energy expenses by \$475. From an environmental perspective the system will prevent the burning of three tons of coal every year to generate electricity and prevent the annual emission of 15,095 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. And on days when the system generates more electricity than the Starks use, the local utility purchases the excess, further lowering the family's energy costs and reducing the amount of electricity the utility must generate by burning fossil fuels.

### **Overall Program Success**

Focus on Energy's work with state residents is just part of the program's success. Business utility ratepayers have benefited, too. To date, Focus on Energy's business, residential and renewable energy programs have saved utility ratepayers more than \$43.9 million in annual energy costs. The savings will reach nearly \$289.6 million (in today's dollars) over the lifetime of the energy-saving measures implemented.

### **About Focus on Energy**

Focus on Energy is a public-private partnership offering energy information and services to energy utility customers throughout Wisconsin. The goals of this program are to encourage energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, enhance the environment and ensure the future supply of energy for Wisconsin. For more information, call 800-762-7077 or visit [www.focusonenergy.com](http://www.focusonenergy.com).

###

***NOTE TO EDITORS:*** *The attached tables provide details about the financial, energy and environmental savings generated by Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program.*

<b>FOCUS ON ENERGY BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION BY SECTOR</b> <b>July 2001 – March 2004</b>				
	<b>Business</b>	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Renewable Energy</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Electricity Kilowatt-hour Savings (Annual)</b>	246,277,891	203,547,551	4,097,068	453,922,510
<b>Natural Gas Therms Savings (Annual)</b>	14,422,508	3,815,075	79,025	18,316,608
<b>Energy Cost Savings (Annual)</b>	\$23,354,222	\$20,220,282	\$353,855	\$43,928,359
<b>Energy Cost Savings (Cumulative Over Lifetime of Projects)</b>	\$151,910,529	\$134,169,895	\$3,498,290	\$289,578,714

Annual electric and natural gas savings are equivalent to:

- Meeting the electricity needs of the town of Oconto Falls, Wis. for more than 47 years.
- Preventing the annual emissions from 92,331 cars.
- The same energy value as nearly 1.3 million barrels of oil.
- The energy produced by burning 235,397 tons of coal.
- Meeting the electricity needs of 47,269 Wisconsin homes and the natural gas needs of 19,743 Wisconsin homes for one year.

<b>FOCUS ON ENERGY EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS (ANNUAL)</b> <b>July 2001 – March 2004</b>			
<b>Nitrogen Oxides</b>	<b>Sulfur Dioxide</b>	<b>Greenhouse Gas Carbon Dioxide</b>	<b>Mercury</b>
3,205,183 pounds	5,085,735 pounds	1,354,815,032 pounds	18 pounds

**NOTES:** Nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide are considered primary causes of acid rain. Greenhouse gas carbon dioxide is linked to global climate change. Mercury is a neurotoxin in low doses, affecting the function and development of the nervous system.

###