



focus on energysm

The power is within you.

..... **Feature Story**

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WISCONSIN HOTELS & RESTAURANTS FIND ENERGY SAVINGS HOSPITABLE

MADISON, Wis. (January 11, 2010) – Wisconsin has long been known for its delicious Friday fish fries and scenic getaways; however, as consumers and business travelers throughout the state continue to take a hard look at discretionary spending, many hotels and restaurants are feeling the pinch.

Despite fewer customers many hotels, motels, and restaurants are moving to energy efficiency as a way to save money, yet continue the deep frying and on-demand hot showers that customers have come to expect. For a lot of these businesses, energy is being used 24 hours a day, seven days a week. That amount of use can have a definite impact on their bottom line.

But what can reducing energy use do for these hospitality businesses? For Wisconsin hotels, a 10 percent reduction in energy usage is equivalent to a 1 percent increase in their average daily rates. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR[®] program, reducing energy use by 10 percent across the hospitality industry would save \$285 million across the United States.

Locally, Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's statewide resource for energy efficiency and renewable energy, has already helped many Wisconsin restaurants and hotels see these savings. To date, Focus helped implement cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with businesses across the state resulting in savings of over 1 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity and 68 million therms of natural gas, resulting in annual energy cost savings of nearly \$151 million. Along with helping achieve these incredible savings, Focus also provides technical expertise, training, and financial incentives to make it as simple as possible for businesses to make energy efficient changes.

Getting Started

Despite all the opportunities for financial savings, many companies are still struggling to establish what changes will be most beneficial. Some are cautious given the financial commitment to begin projects, and others aren't sure which changes will provide the fastest return on investment.

A great starting point for hotels and is an energy use self-assessment. In under an hour, this tool will help companies examine their facility and start to understand the most energy intensive areas of their business. A Focus energy advisor will take that information and work hand-in-hand with companies to

start developing a plan for change. Focus will also be able to help businesses benchmark their facilities to give owners an idea of how their energy usage stacks up against similar businesses.

On the Road to Energy Efficiency

To get the ball rolling, often there are changes companies can make with little to no investment that will pay for themselves in under a year. For projects that require a more serious capital investment, Focus offers financial incentives to help boost the payback period and make projects more economically feasible.

Behavioral changes are a great place to start thinking about energy efficiency during the daily routine. Be conscious of not having excessive televisions on when an area is empty, wait to run the dish washer until it is full and turn off kitchen equipment when not in use. These are all small changes that can start to add up quickly. Other things for businesses to keep in mind include:

- Swapping out existing lighting for more energy efficient options
- Installing low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators
- Performing preventative maintenance on heating, cooling, and refrigeration equipment
- Adjusting purchasing strategies to include products that would qualify for Focus on Energy incentives

As consumers are increasingly considering green options, it is important for the hospitality industry to inform their guests on the improvements that are happening. Keep in mind promotional opportunities to showcase projects including fact sheets showing off green initiatives, in-room or on-table cards, and industry certifications such as *Travel Green*. Focus even offers co-op advertising dollars to help businesses promote the changes they have made.

A state proud of its food and hospitality industry relies on forward-thinking business owners to make smart decisions regarding how their operations affect their bottom line as well as the environment. Focus offers a variety of resources and financial incentives to help companies make it a reality.

For more information or to see what financial incentives companies qualify for, contact Focus on Energy at (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

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