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## **Overture Center Continues Tradition with Energy Savings Innovation**

*- Center saves \$52,000 annually from energy efficiency upgrades -*

**MADISON, Wis. (March 31, 2009)** — Downtown Madison’s world-class performing arts center has stood as a landmark on historic State Street for decades. From its start as the Capitol Theater in 1928, to its transformation into the Madison Civic Center in 1980, to the modern Overture Center we enjoy today — the building has served Madison’s community with a long-standing tradition of innovation and excellence.

With the help of Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, that tradition continues with innovative energy efficiency and high performance standards. The Overture Center recently was awarded a \$35,000 financial incentive for retrocommissioning the building and expects to save \$52,000 per year in utility costs.

“We strive to do everything we can to conserve energy and cut back on operating costs,” said Glenn Weihert, director of facility operations at the Overture Center. “Focus on Energy provided us with a lot of direction and now we’re seeing impressive results.”

Retrocommissioning follows the same principles of new construction but applies the commissioning process to existing buildings through in-depth analysis of operational and maintenance systems. The goal is to optimize building performance by implementing relatively low-cost design, operational and maintenance improvements.

The project uncovered several cost-effective measures to boost energy efficiency in the 358,000-square-foot building including:

- Implementing variable cooling and heating system set points that adjust year round to meet the building’s needs;

- more -

- Increasing cooling tower efficiency by having the multiple fans work in tandem;
- Eliminating unneeded heating and ventilation to backstage areas when unoccupied;
- Reducing the energy needed to maintain comfort in the four-story-tall glass lobby by optimizing controls;
- Maximizing economizer operation to take full advantage of free cooling when available;
- Implementing a new strategy to pre-cool Overture Hall before events with less energy; and
- Upgrading lighting controls.

Together, these measures will save more than 376,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity and 10,000 therms of natural gas annually — saving enough energy to power 50 Wisconsin homes for a year. Overture Center will also benefit with a \$52,000 savings on its energy bills each year.

“More businesses should take advantage of retrocommissioning to really become aware of what’s going on within the building,” Weihert explained. “The paybacks are quick and there is so much energy savings potential.”

“Retrocommissioning is an excellent way to get facility systems in-sync to work better together and perform at higher levels,” said Ken Williams, Focus on Energy’s business programs director. “Substantial costs can be saved by getting energy management and building automation systems running at optimal levels.”

Focus on Energy can help businesses and residents across the state identify and evaluate energy-saving opportunities, provide recommendations, develop energy management plans and arrange technical training opportunities about energy conservation. To find out how you can benefit from Focus on Energy call (800) 762-7077.

### **About The Overture Center**

Overture Center fills a city block in downtown Madison, Wis., with world-class venues for the performing and visual arts. Overture presents hundreds of performances, art exhibitions and educational and community events each year. Visit [overturecenter.com](http://overturecenter.com) for more information.

### **About Focus on Energy**

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state’s growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information, call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).