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Governor Doyle Encourages Racine Residents to Sign Up For Free Energy Audits to Save Energy, Money

- Limited-time, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded program offers residents a home energy check-up, plus tips, advice, and free installation of energy saving devices -

Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. (August 11, 2009) — Governor Jim Doyle today urged Racine homeowners to take advantage of Recovery-funded projects and sign up for free energy inspections by young workers in an Energy Advocate project led by the Department of Workforce Development (DWD).

“These young workers can help you save on your utility bills and conserve energy,” Governor Doyle said. “During their visit, they can install free energy saving devices such as a low-flow showerhead. Wisconsin is receiving more than \$141 million for weatherization under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Our energy advocates can help you take an important, first step to big savings.”

The project is one of many ARRA-funded efforts that will employ approximately 4,000 Wisconsin young adults statewide through June 2011. With federal ARRA funds, Governor Doyle provided 25 individuals, 18 to 24 years of age, employment in “green jobs,” while also helping homeowners cut utility bills, save money and conserve energy.

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, has partnered with the DWD and the Southeast WI Workforce Development Board, to offer Together We Save—a summer program dedicated to helping residents in select communities save energy and money at home.

Racine is one of five cities chosen for the Energy Advocate project. These five cities were selected based on high unemployment, predominantly older homes and many young people seeking jobs. The ARRA-funded project provides for five energy advocates in each community for the Together We Save effort.

Together We Save offers practical advice to help residents identify energy saving opportunities and learn ways to reduce their monthly energy bills.

Bring home the savings

Together We Save brings participating homeowners a free energy audit performed by a trained energy advocate from the community. Equipped with a comprehensive checklist, the advocate will review the home's energy-related systems, the number, age, and condition of appliances and the types of lighting used in lamps and fixtures. In this way, the advocate can learn—and share with homeowners—how the home is using, or potentially misusing, energy.

If equipment is found to be old or inefficient, the advocate may recommend solutions and inform homeowners about financial incentives for qualifying upgrades. At this time, residents will also receive free installations of energy saving devices, including a water-saving showerhead, a faucet aerator and a compact fluorescent light bulb.

Advocates will also take the time to answer questions, offer tips and show homeowners the optimal settings for refrigerators and freezers, thermostats, water heaters and more. They can even show homeowners how to read and understand their energy bills. After the audit, homeowners can choose to receive ongoing support in the form of electronic newsletters and other information focused on energy efficiency.

“Working together, we can save money and energy while protecting our environment,” DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman said. “I join Governor Doyle in urging homeowners to schedule a free inspection by our energy advocates.”

Participation is limited

Together We Save presents homeowners a limited-time opportunity to save energy and money with energy efficient improvements that are good for them, their families and the environment. Interested residents are encouraged to learn more about the program and schedule their home energy audits by calling (262) 221-1067.

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.

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