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Governor Doyle Offers Reward for Replacement of Outdated Furnaces

-Energy efficient furnaces can save on heating bills and energy consumption-

MADISON, Wis. (October 17, 2006) – This fall, Governor Doyle unveiled the new furnace bounty program to help working families save money on their heating bills this winter. Beginning October 16, 2006, for a limited time, the Governor, in cooperation with Focus on Energy, the state’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, will be offering a \$300 reward to those households that replace their very inefficient old natural gas furnaces with a new model. The natural gas furnaces being targeted are typically at least 40 years old and have Annual Fuel Utilization Efficiency (AFUE) ratings of 60 percent or less, meaning that only 60 percent of the energy used is being converted to heat (the other 40 percent is wasted). Residents will receive the reward if the new energy efficient natural gas furnace installed has a minimum AFUE rating of 90 percent.

The best way to identify older model furnaces is by size. Older, inefficient furnace models are usually bigger than the typical efficient furnace. While an efficient furnace is a small box—occupying perhaps a two feet by three feet spot in your basement—the old inefficient models are much larger, often four feet by three feet or larger. The old units also rely on chimneys for venting while newer high efficiency furnaces have more sophisticated, direct-venting systems. These inefficient furnaces are found in older homes and some of the units initially burned coal and were later converted to natural gas.

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“Wisconsin has been a leader in moving toward efficient heating equipment. This initiative will encourage those homeowners with inefficient furnaces to make a change,” said Kimberly Walker, administrator of the state’s Division of Energy. “Heating is typically the largest utility expense for a home. Replacing an inefficient furnace that wastes energy and money with a new, high efficiency model can lower household energy consumption and reduce annual heating costs by \$400.”

Residents can earn an additional \$150 reward if they choose a high efficiency furnace with an ECM furnace fan motor. Furnaces equipped with an ECM have lower annual operating costs and can save you \$40 to \$300 per year depending on how you use the furnace fan. An ECM will save you the most if you run your furnace fan all the time. Multi-stage ECM furnaces not only save you money, they are usually much quieter and less prone to producing unpleasant drafts.

For more information about participating in the Furnace Bounty Program, or qualifying for the \$300 reward, call Focus on Energy at 800.762.7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

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. Since July 2001, the program has helped Wisconsin’s businesses and residents cut their annual utility bills by more than \$98 million – reducing their energy consumption by more than 811 million kilowatt-hours and more than 40 million therms of natural gas. For more information, call 800.762.7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About Energy Help

Governor Doyle's Energy Help Initiative is a comprehensive plan to help Wisconsin residents and businesses facing rising energy costs. This initiative: sets a goal to work with neighboring states to reduce natural gas consumption to help bring down the price; brings energy conservation information together into one source; and makes additional funds available to help residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes. For more information, call 800.522.3014 or visit energyhelp.wi.gov.

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