



STATE OF WISCONSIN

BARBARA LAWTON  
LT. GOVERNOR

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Contact: Robert Chappell, Office of the Lt. Governor, 608-261-2165

## **Eau Claire Accepts Lt. Governor's Energy Star School Challenge**

### ***Lt. Governor and EPA Join Forces to Enroll Wisconsin School Districts to Improve Energy Efficiency by 10 Percent***

Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton today announced that Eau Claire Schools have accepted the Lt. Governor's Energy Star School Challenge, a commitment to reduce energy consumption by ten percent. She made the announcement today in a press conference at Meadowview Elementary School.

"School districts are true leaders when it comes to energy efficiency," Lawton said. "Tight budgets demand it. I am proud that the leaders of Eau Claire Schools have accepted the challenge to be better stewards of taxpayer dollars and of the environment."

"The Eau Claire Area School District is proud of its ongoing energy efficiency management program," said Eau Claire Area School District Superintendent James Leary. "We look forward to joining other Wisconsin Schools in this unified effort to meet Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton's Energy Star School Challenge."

Lt. Governor Lawton issued her Energy Star School Challenge last month as part of her *Green Economy Agenda*. Lawton said that her goal for the challenge is to commit at least 100 new school districts, nearly 25 percent of all Wisconsin school districts, to reduce their energy costs by at least 10 percent.

Participating organizations simply agree to:

1. Make a commitment to improve energy efficiency by 10 percent or more.
2. Measure and track the energy performance of the organization's facilities where possible. Tools are available through the Energy Star program at no cost.
3. Develop and implement a plan consistent with the Energy Star Energy Management Guidelines to achieve energy savings
4. Educate staff and community members about energy efficiency.

The Office of the Lt. Governor's website will connect participants to the Energy Star program and other resources, and provide testimony and coaching from Wisconsin school district energy managers. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

will provide participants with a key contact, as well as start-up and measurement tools and technical assistance, online trainings, strategic advice, new construction advice/guidelines, building upgrade manual, portfolio manager, target finder, service and product and program directory, calculators for upgrade and financial value and for cash flow, financing options, behavioral change suggestions, and “quick payback” projects.

According to the EPA, U.S. schools currently spend \$6 billion a year on energy costs, more than they spend on textbooks and computers combined. Inefficient technologies and design rob them of an average of 20% of that energy purchased.

“With high energy costs looming on the horizon and sure losses to districts with the inefficiencies inherent to their aging building stock, school leaders need access to an easy way to begin to change operations and habits,” Lawton said. “Different districts may follow distinct paths to increased efficiency, but they will all experience improved performance and health with better lighting and air quality. And they will all realize significant savings and cost avoidance that will become addictive and drive continued work toward greater efficiency.”

Lt. Governor Lawton’s office will coordinate the Energy Star School Challenge, including creation of a web page with links to EPA trainings.

“We’ll turn Wisconsin’s school leaders into Energy Stars,” Lawton said.

School districts ready to take the challenge should call Cecely Castillo at the Office of the Lt. Governor at 608-266-3516 or visit [www.ltgov.wisconsin.gov](http://www.ltgov.wisconsin.gov) and click on “Energy Star Schools Challenge” for more information.

Eau Claire joins the school districts of DeForest, Kohler, Manitowoc, and Tomorrow River in taking the Lt. Governor’s Challenge. School districts previously enrolled in the EPA program include Cudahy, Elmbrook, Germantown, Kenosha, Madison, Middleton-Cross Plains, Mukwonago, Racine, Waterford, Wausau, West Allis-West Milwaukee, and Whitefish Bay.