



Polk County Gets **Lift** from Energy Efficiency

Polk County, home to Iowa's capital city, has undergone a face-lift in its ability to save energy. Since February 2003, the county has begun saving more than \$45,000 in annual costs through the Rebuild Iowa program.

"The core of what Polk County hopes to do is operate our facilities more efficiently and avoid the unnecessary cost of inefficient equipment," said Chris Frantsvog, Polk County's energy/resource coordinator.

The county created several strategies to enhance energy efficiency efforts, including rate changes and rebates for new equipment. Additionally, energy-efficiency installations and the implementation of an Energy

Management Improvement (EMI) plan have resulted in the most savings for Polk County.

In the program's first year, energy improvements and studies have focused on the county's administration building, courthouse, jail, planning/public works facility and central maintenance facility. Improvements have included upgraded light fixtures, occupancy sensors, energy-efficient furnaces and water heaters, programmable thermostats, vending machine control devices, insulation and changes in lighting schedules.

"Polk County is unique because we have a lot of square footage," said Frantsvog. "We are focusing only on our own buildings and discovering how we can use and spend less."

Rebuild Iowa is a national initiative that is coordinated on the state level by the Iowa DNR. Through the program, communities focus on methods of increasing energy efficiency, improving productivity, and creating economic development opportunities.

Environmental results from Polk County's initiative also are a testimony to the success of the Rebuild Iowa program. The amount of greenhouse gas emissions prevented through energy savings is equivalent to removing 97 cars from the road. Carbon dioxide emissions also have been reduced by 800 tons.

Future projects for Polk County include improvements and modifications on Veteran's Auditorium, the Convention Center, juvenile detention center and several others.

Contact Rebecca Spiess with the DNR at (515) 281-5007; e-mail: Rebecca.Spiess@dnr.state.ia.us for more details about Rebuild Iowa.



Above and Below: Lighting replacements at the Polk County Jail in Des Moines.



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