

Idaho Falls School District #91: Holiday Shut-down Results in Big Savings for Idaho District

EnergySmart School Close-Ups highlight schools and school districts that have found ways to use energy more wisely, lowering their energy bills and raising awareness of energy issues.

- Improving Existing Buildings
- Financing Building Improvements
- Operating and Maintaining Buildings
- Designing New Buildings
- Teaching and Learning
- Using Renewable Energy Technologies
- Using Alternatively Fueled School Buses



Sometimes the simplest steps can save a district a considerable amount of energy and money. Idaho Falls School District #91 saved more than \$20,000 during one holiday break simply by implementing a shutdown policy that turned off energy-consuming equipment in several schools. The district has since launched a comprehensive energy program that is not only reducing costs but also improving lighting and other elements of the learning environment.



Taylorview Junior High School in Idaho Falls is one of the schools where the district has realized substantial savings through operations and maintenance improvements. Photo courtesy of Idaho Falls Power.

Scope of the energy strategy

School District #91 operates 18 schools encompassing 1.3 million square feet of space. Its energy program began when the state's Rebuild America partnership, Rebuild Idaho, met with district officials and the local utility, Idaho Falls Power, to discuss the possibility of a school shut-down protocol during the 1997 Christmas break. District representatives agreed to implement the plan in six elementary schools, two junior high schools, and two high schools, representing more than 1,200,000 square feet. Facilities personnel simply changed equipment settings or adjusted the programming in their building control systems.



Idaho Falls' Emerson School



A Campaign of Rebuild America
U.S. Department of Energy



PROFILE:

Location:

Idaho Falls, Idaho

District size:

18 buildings totaling
1.5 million square feet

Energy project scope:

Holiday shut-down,
operations and maintenance
improvements

Date completed:

Ongoing since 1997

Energy saved:

2.2 million kWh in
FY2000

Dollars saved:

\$20,000 resulting from
10-day holiday shut-
down, \$83,198 in
FY2000 due to main-
tenance and operations
improvements

Project support:

Idaho Falls Power, Idaho
Department of Water
Resources, U.S.
Department of Energy

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See the EnergySmart Schools Web site at:
www.eren.doe.gov/energysmartschools

Or call the Energy Efficiency and
Renewable Energy Clearinghouse (EREC)
at: 1-800-DOE-3732

Pursuing energy savings in earnest

Ten days later, the district had saved more than \$20,000, and decided to become a Rebuild America partnership to pursue energy savings in earnest. The district worked with Rebuild Idaho, Idaho Falls Power, and the Idaho Department of Water Resources to form a local partnership and develop a five-year action plan for capturing energy savings. They began with preliminary energy analysis of all 18 schools, and identified the 10 most in need of work.



Idaho Falls School hallway

Planning ahead

Full energy audits are being performed on two Idaho Falls schools per year for five years to identify specific energy measures needed—from lighting retrofits, to mechanical system upgrades, to improved windows and insulation.

In the meantime, the partnership provides training for maintenance and custodial staff. The results are clear: improvements to operations and maintenance alone saved the district \$45,000 during the 1998-1999 school year.



The EnergySmart Schools campaign is operated by Rebuild America, through the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Building Technology, State and Community Programs.



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including 20% postconsumer waste.

July 2001
DOE/ESS017