

Pasco County Schools: Benefiting from the Education Energy Managers Association of Florida

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

Pasco County Schools are taking big steps in all aspects of energy efficiency, working as a Rebuild America partner through the “umbrella” strategic partnership of the Education Energy Managers Association of Florida (EEMAF). EEMAF is a growing organization that currently represents two-thirds of the school districts in Florida. Pasco County is a charter member of EEMAF and has representation on its Board of Directors.



A student participating in Pasco County's Energy Patrol takes responsibility for reducing wasteful practices.

Launching an energy management program

Pasco County Schools launched their energy management program in response to escalating energy costs—over 5 percent increases each year. Electricity costs for the schools' 4.3 million square feet of facilities in the 1992-93 school year were \$3.8 million. In light of these expenses, the superintendent and school board decided to write and adopt a formal policy of energy management in conjunction with the establishment of a 17-member District Energy Committee.



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



PROFILE:

Location:

Pasco County, Florida

District size:

5,719,964 square feet

Energy project scope:

Establishment of a District Energy Committee, lighting retrofits, HVAC and lighting controls, Waste Reduction Incentive Program, Energy Patrol Program, energy education curriculum units

Date completed:

1999

Dollars saved:

\$1,134,057 annually in avoided costs; \$399,925 annually through lighting improvements

Project funding:

District funding

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A multi-pronged approach

The District Energy Committee established efforts to address the following areas of improvement: retrofits, waste reduction, education, and reporting/monitoring.

- The district's retrofits involved \$1.2 million in lighting improvements (including changing out 53,147 fixtures in six years) and other improvements such as digital HVAC controls, occupancy sensors, and solar window films—all paid for through savings from reduced energy bills.

- The Waste Reduction Subcommittee's Incentive Program has granted \$250,000 in awards to 39 schools over a six-year period in response to changes in basic energy use habits, such as turning off lights and appliances.

- The district also developed elementary and middle school energy education units that integrated "Earth Patrols," students who take responsibility for "patrolling" the school facilities and reducing wasteful practices.

- The district has also monitored its energy use through a software program that helps to track gas, water, sewer, irrigation, and solid waste usage and costs.



"Needless to say, the Energy Management Program has been a tremendous success over the past six years. The savings have allowed us to do things that otherwise would not have been considered, including salary improvements."

*Jean Larkin, School Board Chairman,
Pasco County Schools*

Success and savings

The energy management program has been very successful. The 1998-99 school year showed \$1.13 million in avoided energy costs. While the district increased its floor space by 31% (5.7 million square feet), its costs remained the \$3.8 million documented in the 1992-93 school year. The savings have allowed the school board to allot additional funds to salary improvements and the purchase of classroom materials—two issues not sufficiently funded by the original school budget. Pasco County Schools are now some of the lowest cost energy users in the state.



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www.eren.doe.gov/energysmartschools

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