

Focus on Rebuild Iowa



1st Quarter 2000 • Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Communities involved in Rebuild Iowa integrate local, state and federal resources to secure the economic and environmental benefits of energy efficiency.

Program Results

Measurable results achieved from 1996 - December 1999:

- 5 communities currently participating
- 243 building owners, with 920 buildings agreeing to implement improvements
- 367 energy audits completed
- \$9.9 million in identified improvements, with the potential to save:
 - \$1,065,426 in cost savings annually
 - 20,243 tons CO₂ avoided annually
 - 52 tons of particulate avoided annually
 - 445 tons SO_x avoided annually
 - 39 tons NO_x avoided annually
- Create 248 job-years

New Communities

The Iowa DNR is pleased to announce two new participants in Rebuild Iowa. Both Muscatine Power and Water (on behalf of the City of Muscatine) and the City of Akron joined the program in the last three months. Over the next year, these communities will develop action plans focusing local resources on community goals. Muscatine and Akron are strong additions to the Rebuild Iowa program and we look forward to working with them on their individual objectives.

Community Profile: Muscatine

Location: Eastern Iowa, twenty miles southwest of the Quad Cities

Population: 24,000

Community Highlights: Stanely Consulting Engineers, H.J. Heinz, Hon Industries, Bandag, Inc.

Goals for Rebuild Muscatine:

- Reduce residential and commercial energy consumption by 5 percent over a five-year period.
- Introduce a building energy rating system by 2001.
- Educate local citizens on how to facilitate energy audits, resulting in residences and businesses implementing energy conservation projects.
- Audit 75 percent of the churches and city buildings in Muscatine by the end of 2001.

Coordinator: John Root, Energy Services Advisor for Muscatine Power and Water. Root's work in renewable energy and energy efficiency spans more than 20 years, including operating his own energy-efficiency business.

In Progress: Muscatine joined Rebuild Iowa in January. John Root, the community coordinator, has been busy ever since.

Root held the first Advisory Committee meeting in February at the utility's offices. Committee members represent a range of community interests, including utility and city staff, energy service providers, public building administrators and homeowners. During the meeting, the group discussed community goals, identified local resources to help Rebuild Muscatine, and targeted additional resources needed to make the program successful. The community's action plan will be developed from this and subsequent discussions. The committee will meet monthly to review the program's progress and offer recommendations.

Root is working with program consultants from the Iowa Energy Bank to assist various public buildings in Muscatine. The Energy Bank, run by the Department of Natural Resources, is an energy management program for public schools, hospitals, private schools and local governments. The program helps public-sector facilities identify and implement energy-efficiency improvements, establish financing, and ensure the technical quality of projects. Rebuild Iowa can pull together various programs such as this to help building owners achieve energy efficiency.

Educating the community about sustainability is a strong part of the Muscatine effort. Root has begun teaching energy efficiency and renewable energy classes to local students, including simple assessments of energy use in their own homes. Students who return their assessments can win a baseball cap with photovoltaic cells powering a small fan on the hat's bill. Muscatine Power and Water also is communicating through bill inserts, public service announcements, newspaper articles and a new web page.

This year, Rebuild Muscatine plans to enroll 15 buildings, complete 15 energy analyses, and assist in the implementation of more than \$100,000 in energy efficiency improvements. In upcoming years, the community plans to expand the program to include the residential sector, including promoting the use of renewable energy sources.

What's Next?

To help community leaders learn about sustainable development, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is sponsoring the *Natural Capitalism Seminar for Business and Community* on April 11, 2000. The Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) will facilitate this innovative seminar, showing communities how to reduce energy costs and increase productivity in their homes and businesses.

Hunter Lovins, Co-CEO of RMI and co-author of *Natural Capitalism*, will lead discussion on resource efficiency and modeling natural systems to increase jobs, income and profits. Other workshop presenters will share compelling Iowa and national success stories about innovative businesses and communities improving their bottom lines. Follow-up discussions will help workshop participants: chart community progress; compare workshop knowledge with community action; and network with peers about sustainability and energy efficiency programs.

For more information on the workshop, contact Michelle Sinsel with the Rocky Mountain Institute at fax: (970) 927-4510, e-mail: msinsel@rmi.org

For More Information

If you would like more information on Rebuild Iowa, please contact Heather Silberhorn at (515) 281-5007, e-mail: heather.silberhorn@dnr.state.ia.us