

Profile



Glen Kizer

1500 Days: the Central Ohio Energy Efficiency Project has hit its stride and is poised to run circles around its original goal to retrofit 3 million square feet in just over four years. The man at the helm of the partnership, Glen Kizer, president of the Foundation for Environmental Education, has

everything to do with the partnership's impressive show of progress.

"We said we'd do 3 million square feet in 1500 days," said Kizer, an environmental lawyer and former division chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (DNR). That schedule would have the work completed by fall 2000. "We're over it. We have about 1.9 million square feet in retrofit now, plus 1.5 million square feet already completed. We've now revised our long-term retrofit goal to 30 million square feet."

The partnership originally set out to do retrofit projects in central Ohio that involved restaurant and theater chains, a school system, a college and a prison. Many of these projects have since added a solar dimension. Kizer began doing energy efficiency projects at schools with Rebuild America at about the same time his Foundation began building a Solar Ohio Project. The blending of energy-efficiency and solar solutions has taken 1500 Days partnership and the Ohio Solar Project in some new and interesting directions.

“Once we began educating schools about energy efficiency, they had the insight into their buildings to understand the importance of solar,” he said. “The reverse was also true. Once schools understood solar strategies, they wanted to explore energy-efficiency improvements. The two are a natural fit. Now these same schools want alternative fuel buses and wind power and solar panels for their classrooms. Once you open the door to the future a little bit, your targets will demand you swing the door wide open.”

Kizer was instrumental in getting Bluffsview Elementary School, which underwent an energy retrofit, to install a photovoltaic (PV) roof. (See Workbench, this issue.) He also raised the project’s profile by working with the media. The project drew strong interest from the academic community and current plans call for completing 20 PV rooftop projects in Ohio schools this year as part of the Clinton Administration’s Million Solar Roofs initiative.

1500 Days is working with Ohio University on plans for a \$15 million retrofit of campus buildings. The scope of work may include the installation of a solar panel outside of the basketball arena, which dovetails nicely with what the partnership set out to do. And that is to choose high-visibility projects that people can see, understand and talk about. The partnership is also involved in the retrofit of three popular restaurants in the expanding Bravo Restaurant chain.

“We’re on their team and we’re helping them plan more efficient buildings,” Kizer said. “Some will be new buildings and some will be moves into existing buildings. They’re talking about solar as well.”

Another 1500 Days initiative is aimed at reducing energy usage in AMC Theatres and in major art facilities throughout the country. AMC is running public service announcements on television in Ohio with a message of commitment to saving energy and to increasing the comfort of its patrons by using sophisticated

environmental controls. Several AMC theaters are reducing their energy costs by 28 percent, Kizer said. AMC is also displaying Solar Schools Posters in their lobbies.

Another 1500 Days partner, Ashland Chemical, “bought in” to investing in energy-efficiency in stages and is saving \$250,000 a year as a result, Kizer said. The company started with lighting upgrades and later added occupancy sensors, a cogeneration system, and HVAC improvements.

Kizer and the Foundation are producing a television series titled Environmental Weekly for PBS, college stations and K-12 schools. The series is uplinked monthly and is available to millions of homes and thousands of schools.

Kizer brings a substantial amount of energy efficiency experience to Rebuild America. He had an environmental law practice in Ohio for 10 years and prior to that served as Ohio assistant attorney general in environmental law. While with the Ohio DNR, he oversaw a project that resulted in the planting of 1 million trees in 30 days. He is presently working on a tree planting initiative for the United Nations.

“We have no plans to stop,” Kizer said of his Rebuild partnership.

“We are taking what we’ve learned to expand our energy efficiency activities in the future.”