

Partnership Leaders Take Earth Day Radio Tour

Four Rebuild America partnerships participated in a radio tour during Earth Day week in April in an effort to educate the public about how saving energy and operating more efficient buildings can save communities money. Partnership leaders who rose to the occasion were Paulette Huber of Rebuild Toledo (OH); John Root of Muscatine Power & Water (IA); Michael Hoffer of Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA-Atlanta); and Mark Mikenas of Rebuild Kewanee (IL). The interviews were coordinated by Rebuild America's M&C team. The following are some highlights of what these partnership leaders addressed during their radio interviews.

During her 10-minute interview with WFRO-FM radio, Paulette Huber explained how energy audits can be effective tools for demonstrating to building owners that energy-efficiency improvements can be paid for over five years with the savings that result from the measures. Huber said Rebuild Toledo performs energy audits that are tailored to the building and factor in how the building is used — number of occupants, hours of operation, and the kind of tasks being performed on the premises. She also drew the link between saving energy and decreasing the pollution that results from the burning of fossil fuels to generate power.

John Root, Energy Services Advisor for Muscatine Power & Water (MP&W), and leader of that utility's Rebuild America partnership, and Gary Weiskamp, public relations manager for MP&W, spoke to the benefits of saving energy for their community during a 20-minute live interview with KBUR-FM radio. Root joined the MP&W one year ago and prior to that, was an energy educator and founder of the Rebuild Cedar Falls (IA)

partnership operating at the University of Northern Iowa. Root told listeners that during its first three months of operation, the MP&W partnership attracted an elementary school, a high school and 29 commercial customers that were interested in saving energy. Students in the targeted schools have been taught how to perform home energy audits with parental involvement and have completed 100 audits at present. On the commercial side, the partnership has completed building energy audits for its commercial partners and has determined that an investment of \$425,000 in energy improvements collectively will save these 29 partners \$100,000 annually.

Tapping the Talent Pool

Root noted the importance of tapping people in the community who are interested in energy efficiency — building maintenance staff, city housing managers, architects, utility representatives — to build a successful partnership. In addition to directing listeners to 1-800-DOE-3732 for information, Root invited them to visit the MP&W website: www.mpw.org.

In Atlanta, Michael Hoffer presides over BOMA's largest chapter: 1,000 members, half of whom manage buildings. During

his 10-minute live interview with WKUN-FM, he noted the potential for reducing energy consumption and emissions and saving money in the commercial sector, sharing his experience as the manager of a 50-story, 1 million square-foot tower that has 4,000 occupants. The BOMA-Atlanta partnership was "seeking ways to be more efficient energy users," he said.

Hoffer said that utility costs for commercial buildings in Atlanta run \$1.40 to \$1.50 per square foot, which puts the cost for the 1-million-square-foot building he manages at about \$1.5 million annually. Hoffer works with Georgia Power to shave one third, or \$500,000, off the building's annual utility costs.

Going into Conservation Mode

How does he do this? Hoffer explained that through prior arrangement with Georgia Power, the building periodically goes off the grid and relies on its own independent emergency generators. This requires going into "energy conservation mode" by taking steps to reduce demand, such as dimming lights and turning off motors, he explained. Noting that lighting, not air conditioning, accounts for the lion's share of a building's electricity use,

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CORRECTION:

*In the giving-credit-where-credit-is-due department...*The March-April 2000 issue of *Partner Update* should have credited **Leanne Hoadley**, leader of Rebuild Presidio, and not her predecessor, **Laura Keresty**, as author of the article titled "Rebuild Presidio: Getting Tenants to Buy into Energy Efficiency." Contact information for Leanne is leanne_hoadley@grove.com or 415-561-2500 ext. 205. Our sincere apologies for the gaffe.



Rebuild Presidio team members front row, from left: Cyane Dandridge, Devon Danz, Maric Munn, Shelley and Liam Hamilton; back row, from left: Leanne Hoadley, Dale Sartor, Kirk Brown, June Barnard, Henry Dakin and David Coggeshall.

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Hoffer retrofitted the lighting throughout the 10-year-old building, realizing significant savings from replacing incandescent fixtures with compact fluorescent lighting and switching from magnetic to electronic ballasts.

“The payback was tremendous,” he said. Increasing the energy efficiency of commercial buildings means that Georgia Power can avoid building new plants – and it means the environment

benefits from burning less coal and fuel oil and from using less hydroelectricity, Hoffer noted. Hoffer concluded his remarks by saying that Rebuild America helped small businesses as well as large businesses save energy and dollars and that it was

looking to develop relationships with more communities nationwide.

Mark Mikenas delved into areas central to Rebuild America during his 20-minute live interview with WOC-AM, including how to help businesses conserve energy and how to spur economic development by expanding on efforts underway in communities. Mikenas addressed the benefits of using energy audits as a decision-making tool to help select the buildings likely to have the best payback. He also mentioned the importance of a recent state grant award to Rebuild Kewanee that will enable the partnership to hire an energy coordinator to raise public awareness about the community benefits of energy efficiency. This community outreach effort will have a special emphasis on getting students and teachers involved in energy conservation, using contests as a vehicle to stir interest.

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