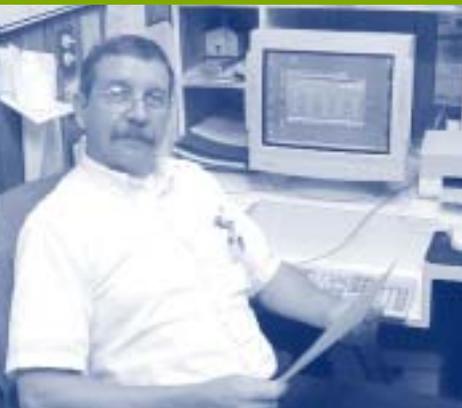


Rebuild America EnergySmart Schools Success Stories highlight schools and school districts that are making smart choices about energy, reducing energy and raising awareness of energy issues.

- New Building Design
- Existing Building Improvement
- Operations and Maintenance
- Renewable Energy Technologies
- Financing Building Improvements
- Energy Education



Marion County Public Schools

Already Saving, With More Savings to Come

The Marion County Public Schools in North-Central Florida is saving more money each year as it retrofits buildings with energy-efficiency equipment. It has several years to go before it reaches its peak in terms of saving energy and money.

The Challenge

Marion County Public Schools wanted to reduce its utility bills. With 48 schools and about 10 ancillary facilities containing 4.5 million square feet of space, its energy expenses were significant - more than \$4 million per year. Its officials did not know what technologies and practices might be best for energy-efficiency improvements. The district needed to educate itself about the best strategies and make informed decisions. At the same time, it wanted to know how to involve students in its energy-saving efforts.

The Solution

The first step for Marion County Public Schools was to hire a full-time energy management specialist, Robert Van Der Like. His early focus was on getting up to speed on what could be done and "who's doing what." Recognizing that one way to learn fast is to join groups of specialists, he became a member of the Educational Energy Managers Association of Florida. In March 2001, Marion County Public Schools became a Rebuild America community partnership.

Rebuild America helped Van Der Like with networking, learning about what people are doing, and becoming aware of what resources are available. "That's probably been the biggest assistance that this partnership has given me," Van Der Like suggests. In Rebuild America, he had a convenient pool of responsive, knowledgeable sources, he says.

The No. 1 energy-efficiency improvement in terms of quick, assured payback has been the installation of automated control systems. Some already had been installed, and Van Der Like pushed to complete that process. "Before you do anything else, you need some degree of control over the switches," he says.

Behavior modification also is an important consideration, for the district's staff and students. It ties in with the educational mission of schools, because the modification of student behavior becomes a part of energy education.

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Partnership Facts:

Name of Partnership:
Marion County Public Schools

Targeted Buildings:
K-12 school buildings

Space Improved:
880,000 square feet

Marion County School District:
Enrollment: 39,000 students
4.9 million square feet
Energy costs: \$4.5 million per year
Annual Energy Savings: \$219,000
(2001-02 school year)

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For more information about energy-saving technologies, visit the Business Partners section of the Rebuild America Web site: www.rebuild.gov or contact Rebuild America at: 252-459-4664.

Project Green Machine, with its own Web site (www.projectgreenmachine.org), is the school system's environmental education initiative, providing support to curricula on energy and other resource subjects. Students not only learn in classrooms but join in "energy patrols" to identify and minimize energy waste.

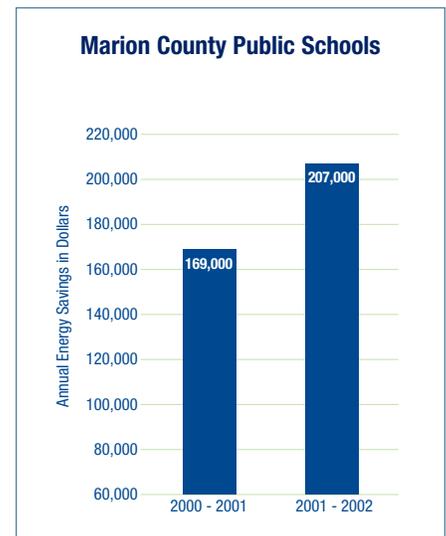
Quantifiable results of the Marion County Public School's energy-efficiency efforts include savings of \$169,000 for the 2000-01 school year and \$207,000 for the 2001-02 school year.

"I don't see us realizing our full potential before three or four years from now," adds Van Der Like.

For the 2002-03 school year, the district budgeted about \$300,000 for energy-efficiency projects. Contractors will be asked to bid on a lighting retrofit project for four or five schools. The district's maintenance staff is installing timers for hot-water heaters and programmable thermostats for portable classrooms.

The school district has been analyzing performance contracting, in which savings on utility bills cover the cost of energy-efficiency improvements. Specialists from energy service companies have completed "walk-throughs" to estimate the potential for energy-efficiency upgrades at some schools. The personnel who learn the details of performance contracting also must educate other staff, principals and school board members. Van Der Like wants to work performance contracting into the district's five-year plan.

A Web site also was set up for the district's energy management effort, www.marion.k12.fl.us/dept/emg/ - with data, tips, links and other information.



To learn more visit: www.eere.energy.gov

A Strong Energy Portfolio for a Strong America

Energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy will mean a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy independence for America. Working with a wide array of state, community, industry, and university partners, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy invests in a diverse portfolio of energy technologies.

Rebuild America is a U.S. Department of Energy program that focuses on improving communities through energy-saving solutions.



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