Fluvanna County Sustainability News

July 24, 2008

The figures are in for this month. We had lots of buildings with energy reductions over this time last year: Fork Union Firehouse, 32.6%; Commonwealth Attorney's building, 13.1%; Treasurer's Office, 10.4%; Library-DSS, 8.75%; Admin. Building, 6.6%; Kent Store Firehouse, 6.3%; Palmyra Firehouse, 4.1%; MACCA Building 3.5%; Public Works Building, 3.3%; Performing Arts Center, 2.8%. Congratulations to you all for helping to reduce energy use. With everyone helping out we can make a very real difference in how much energy we use. That's the good news.

This year we saw record price increases in heating fuel and electricity costs. So even with these reductions our total energy bill increased. We do however have some opportunities for further reductions. By keeping thermostats between 75-78°F in the cooling season and between 68-74°F in the heating season, we could save 3-5% or more. Remember that for every degree that we raise the thermostats the summer we would save 3%. Raising the temperature from 75 to 78 in the summer could save 15% (VA Department of Mines Minerals and Energy). This and other measures being contemplated could reduce our total energy use by 10 to 15% in the next year. Remember -- it takes your help to make this happen.

Lots of people have had good ideas for saving energy. Some have gone above and beyond to make a difference:

- Sheriff Ryant Washington has cut back on the lighting in the hallways and set thermostats to save energy at the Public Safety Building. His staff is looking for ways to save energy every day.
- Keith Meyerl keeps an eye on the thermostats and lighting in the Community Center to make sure that unoccupied rooms are energy efficient. He gets lots of help from his staff.
- Renee Hoover asked to have the lighting in her office permanently reduced by 50%. By disconnecting some of the bulbs and ballasts she will save electricity and not adversely affect the amount of light in her office.

These folks will be receiving an energy saving Compact Florescent Light (CFL) for their "Bright Ideas".

Speaking of Compact Florescent Lights, everyone can participate in the Change the World Campaign by adding CFL's to their homes. This is an effort sponsored by the National Association of Counties and the EPA. Compact florescent

lighting saves energy by providing the same illumination as an incandescent light for ¼ the energy. A CFL uses 13 watts of electricity to provide the same illumination as a 60 watt incandescent bulb, and they last ten times as long. Modern CFL's come on quickly and provide a pleasant "whiter" light with no flicker. Prices are coming down on these too, and make them very affordable and cost effective.

Another part of the Change the World Campaign is to take a pledge to replace appliances (when this is required) with Energy Star rated appliances. Energy Star rated appliances save energy every day by using less energy than other appliances. Energy Star is a part of the EPA. You can take the Change the world Challenge at www.greencounties.org/changetheworld (Contact Curtis Putnam for a paper pledge if you do not have access to the internet)
Fluvanna County will be in contention for a prize of 1000 CFL's if we are the top county to collect pledges in this campaign.

And don't forget to take the Drive Smarter Challenge at: www.drivesmarterchallenge.org It's fun and can save you lots of money over the next year.

For questions or more information please contact Curtis Putnam.
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