

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chairman's Update --

Green Web Site Offers Many Ways to Conserve Energy and Resources

**By Barry Leemann
Chairman, Oswego County Legislature**

Over the past several months I've kept you updated on the progress of the Oswego County Green Team and some of the ways that Oswego County government has been able to access grant funds for energy conservation projects. By taking advantage of National Grid's Small Business Program, the county has completed energy audits of several buildings and installed energy efficient lighting at Camp Hollis, the Pulaski and Oswego Courthouses, and the Buildings and Grounds facility in Oswego.

This fall, thanks to a NYSERDA grant, we'll be retrofitting more than 600 light fixtures at the Legislative Office Building on East Bridge Street in Oswego. That project will considerably reduce energy consumption for the building and is expected to save almost \$17,500 in annual utility costs.

There are many ways that families, too, can reduce their utility bills, conserve energy and become more energy independent. The Renew Oswego County Web site at www.RenewOswegoCounty.org contains information and links to cash incentive programs from federal, state, utility, and third-party sources. The site is a one-stop resource for you to access the \$3 billion in incentives available for New Yorkers to save money on their utility bills.

If you're thinking about an upgrade for your roof, insulation, windows, doors, heating, air conditioning, or appliances at home or at work - you can find out about cash incentives and other programs to help you be more efficient. You can also sign up for the

“Renew Oswego County” monthly newsletter for money-saving tips and information on local suppliers.

Homeowner incentive options include:

- 30 percent federal tax credits on a variety of efficiency and renewable energy purchases. The proposed federal HOMESTAR rebate program, if it becomes law this year, will provide \$6 billion to encourage immediate investment in energy-efficient appliances, building mechanical systems and insulation, and whole-home energy efficiency retrofits. Homeowners may receive total incentives of up to \$8,000, not to exceed 50 percent of total project costs.
- New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) appliance rebates, solar and wind energy payments to qualified installers, as well as incentives and financing for home energy audits and recommended energy efficiency measures.
- Although National Grid expended their budget for heating equipment rebates, more utility programs are coming. National Grid customers soon will have an Enhanced Home Sealing program, with a \$50 home assessment and 50 percent incentive up to \$3,000 for attic, wall, and/or duct insulation.
- For income-eligible homeowners, there’s access to free weatherization assistance and Home Energy Assistance Program information.

The site contains tools on estimating energy costs for your entire household. You may be wasting money on your next appliance, home improvement, lighting, or heating/cooling system without checking to see what incentives are available for your household.

www.RenewOswegoCounty.org also contains information about workplace and business incentives from utility, state, and federal sources. National Grid offers a free audit and pays up to 70 percent of the cost to upgrade lighting for small non-residential buildings. Programs for large buildings are forthcoming. NYSERDA offers new construction and existing facilities programs, reduced-cost energy audits, and incentives to install onsite solar, wind, and co-generation systems.

There are state “demand response” programs that pay large facilities to reduce demand when the grid is stressed, and federal tax credits are available for lighting, building envelope (e.g. doors, windows, insulation), and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.

The benefits of using these programs include:

- Significant cash back or discounts on your purchase;
- Ongoing utility cost savings. You may be able to save 30 to 40 percent on your energy bills for years into the future; and
- A cleaner environment.

I encourage you to visit www.RenewOswegoCounty.org and learn how these programs can benefit your family. The site is sponsored by Oswego County government as a service to county residents. You may be pleasantly surprised at the ways you can save on energy costs in your own home.