

Oak Hill Receives Coveted Energy Star Award

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Students and staff at Oak Hill Elementary School teamed with the Schools for Energy Efficiency™ Program (SEE) to earn recognition as an ENERGY STAR school.

The south side St. Cloud school received its award on October 28, 2004.

Built in 1990, Oak Hill Community School, with its modern design and efficient operating systems, was poised to be an ENERGY STAR building from the start. The building includes an energy management system (EMS), occupancy sensors and other energy efficient assets. But reaching the ENERGY STAR label plateau required commitment, focus and assistance from an energy expert.

That's why the St. Cloud School District (ISD 742) partnered with SEE, a comprehensive energy management program that focuses on implementing energy efficiency strategies in K-12 schools. The SEE program, which is implemented through Hallberg Engineering, Inc., has strategic partnerships with the US Department of Energy Rebuild America program via the Minnesota State Energy Office, Bishop Energy Engineering and the US Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star Program.

The partnership worked to identify and implement energy efficiency strategies through behavior, operational and physical modifications focusing on a goal of 10% reduction in annual energy usage and an ENERGY STAR rating. To ensure accurate savings measurement, utility tracking and analysis was provided through Bishop Energy Engineering.

During the 2003-2004 school year, support and direction was lead by Oak Hill's principal, Paula Foley. The school and its 894 students embraced the SEE program and began engaging in energy awareness activities such as launching SEE Squads, enlisting the help of classroom monitors to shut off lights and computers and hanging SEE energy efficiency posters and stickers throughout the building. In addition, Oak Hill's lead engineers, Don Gravelle and Dan Schreifels, worked together to fine tune the building's energy management system and increase operational efficiency by monitoring and staggering demand. Tina Lahr, the school's new principal, is committed to continuing the school's energy saving efforts.

The ENERGY STAR success at Oak Hill School was truly a cross-functional team effort. As a result of their efforts, the St. Cloud School District achieved a 2003/2004 year-to-date district-wide energy savings of 8% and received an ENERGY STAR rating for Oak Hill Community School.

*The SEE program uses the ENERGY STAR rating as one of its program goals.