

NEWS RELEASE

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SEE Program Opens Eyes of Children to Life-Long Energy Savings

Hallberg Engineering Wins MEEA's Inspiring Efficiency Education Award

January 3, 2008, St. Paul, Minn. – Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance announced today that Hallberg Engineering, a mechanical and electrical engineering firm, won the Inspiring Efficiency EDUCATION Award for their SEE Program. The Schools for Energy Efficiency™ (SEE) Program engages students, operations staff and teachers to reduce annual energy usage. It is a comprehensive initiative specifically designed for K-12 schools to save energy and money by changing behavior throughout school districts.

In less than five years the SEE program has expanded into 400 schools. Of the 250 schools reporting current results, the average energy savings is 10-20 percent and in total they have avoided \$9.6 million in energy costs in only four years. More than 100 SEE school facilities have qualified for ENERGY STAR Labels, ranking these facilities in the top 25 percent in the nation for efficient operations. In addition 13 SEE school districts, out of only 32 in the nation, have received ENERGY STAR Leader awards for continuous improvement in energy efficiency.

Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance selected the SEE Program because of its outstanding results in their local campaign to increase school's knowledge and action on energy efficiency. Hallberg Engineering described how their approach —though local in scope—is an example for the region.

"This is a very successful program to engage students and adults in a critical initiative that affects all of us – saving energy," said MEEA. "SEE school districts have engaged their students and staff to the point where children are educating their parents on how to be more energy efficient. By raising awareness, we all can affect change in each other."

The \$9.6 million that SEE school districts have avoided paying in utility costs could be used for other, more important, school district expenditures. In total, participating SEE school districts have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 845 million pounds of CO₂. This is equivalent to the emissions of any of the following:

- o 82,968 passenger cars not driven for a year
- o electricity to power 49,206 households for a year, or
- o 319,428 acres of pine forest storing carbon for one year

"We are proud to accept MEEA's Inspiring Efficiency Education Award, and to make a measurable impact in our region," said Joe Hallberg, President of Hallberg Engineering. "Schools working with the SEE program receive action plans, materials, utility tracking, training, and support in order to implement an energy-efficiency program in their school district that delivers immediate and sustainable savings. Our goal is to expand SEE nationally with a presence in schools throughout the United States.

Five years ago, school district clients were asking Hallberg Engineering for advice regarding how to bring energy saving initiatives into the school districts without incurring large capital investment expenses. SEE was created in response to these client needs. Currently, the SEE program works with 17 school districts throughout the states of Minnesota, Louisiana, and New Jersey.

The SEE program is unique because it focuses on changing behavior through both efficient operations and energy awareness materials. With school district budget cuts increasing, it leaves schools with tough decisions about how and where to decrease expenditures. SEE is designed specifically to help school districts save energy and money by providing energy saving strategies targeted towards changing student's and staff's daily habits enabling them to become more energy conscious. Different from competitors, SEE is a non-performance contract type program providing a flexible, systemized plan that districts implement on their own and can customize based on their district needs. As a result, the SEE program pricing is much more cost efficient while still extremely successful in not only saving districts energy and money, but also educating students, staff and administrators.

Summary of MEEA's 2008 Inspiring Efficiency Award recipients, recognizing the Midwest's efficiency leaders:

Inspiring Efficiency IMPACT Award—Miracit Development Corporation for developing Green View Estates. The first "green" subdivision of the City of Columbus, Ohio, the site upholds rigorous environmental standards while producing affordable homes. Homes in the subdivision are 25 to 40% more efficient than standard homes, saving \$900 per year.

Inspiring Efficiency MARKETING Award—Rochester Public Utilities for developing a Commercial Communications Plan to maximize commercial customers' participation in efficiency programs.

Inspiring Efficiency INNOVATION Award—George Bialecki for founding Alternative Energy Builders, a corporation that builds energy efficient communities, and for founding Alternative Energy Living, a non-profit foundation focused on research and energy efficiency education.

Inspiring Efficiency LEADERSHIP Award—Minnesota: Senator D. Scott Dibble, Representative Jeremy Kalin, Sheldon Strom from Center for Energy and Environment, and Christy Brusven of the Department of Commerce for their coalition effort to lead the first, most comprehensive energy policy adoption in the Midwest.

Inspiring Efficiency LEADERSHIP Award—Illinois: Senator Don Harmon and Anne Pramagiorre from Commonwealth Edison for their leadership to gain adoption of the Affordable, Clean Energy Standard, creating a 2% efficiency standard for Illinois.

Inspiring Efficiency LEADERSHIP Award—Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Ann Arbor Energy Office for its long-standing commitment to sustainable energy use. The Energy Office manages projects and programs, develops information resources, and provides expert advice to move the city toward more sustainable energy use.

Inspiring Efficiency CHAIRMAN'S Award—Sara Ward: Retiring Director of the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Energy Efficiency, a founding and active member of the MEEA Board of Directors and stalwart supporter of energy efficiency and renewable energy policy in the Midwest.

Inspiring Efficiency EDUCATION Award—Schools for Energy Efficiency for implementing a program to save energy and money by changing behavior throughout school districts through increasing energy awareness among operations staff, students, teachers, and administrators. The program is in 400 schools, resulting in energy savings of 10-20% and avoiding \$9.6 million in energy costs in its first four years.

Winners will be honored at MEEA's **Inspiring Efficiency Awards Ceremony**, being held at the **Drake Hotel in Chicago, Illinois**, on **January 10, 2008**. Please visit www.mwalliance.org/awards or www.mwalliance.org/conference for more information on the Midwest Energy Solutions Conference.

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