

MPOWER BUSINESS CHAMPION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information Contact:

Jeanne Hoffman, Facilities and Sustainability Manager, (608) 266-4091

Sherrie Gruder, Chairperson City of Madison Sustainable Design and Energy Committee, (608) 262-0398

Bryant Moroder, Sustain Dane Executive Director, (608) 819-0689

Mpower Campaign Seeking Applicants for Mpower Business Champions Program

Madison - Mpower partners have set a goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Madison area. Under the cooperative private-public-not-for-profit, the City of Madison and its growing list of partners and supporters including MG&E, Alliant Energy, Channel 27 WKOW, EPA, Focus on Energy, Rapid Improvement Associates, RENEW Wisconsin, Sierra Club, Sustain Dane and UW-Extension SHWEC- continue to strive to achieve a collective reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) by 100,000 tons by 2011.

Now, thanks to a two-year grant from the EPA and sponsorship from several area organizations, the campaign is launching an expanded effort to provide a year's worth of one-on-one CO2 reduction assistance through a new initiative. The Mpower Business Champions is a new program to help businesses tackle climate change challenges that impact their bottom line and our quality of life. Businesses that demonstrate a serious commitment to sustainability will be selected to participate and will receive one-on-one assistance to take significant steps towards reducing their carbon footprint including:

- Sustainable business practices training, topics will include: green building, environmentally preferable purchasing, energy and water conservation.
- An on-site walk-through energy assessment including a findings and recommendations report
- Direct access to the MadiSUN Solar Owners Agent to provide a wide array of technical, financial and policy information related to solar energy options.
- Use of the Energy Stewards software program to track energy use history, action performance tracking and online forums to learn from others.
- Assistance developing a transportation demand management program to provide commuter options.
- The chance to be featured by Mpower Madison media partner WKOW and in web-based case studies.

MPOWER CHAMPION BUSINESS

Launched in October 2007, the main focus of the campaign to date has been to encourage area businesses and individuals to make a difference toward climate change by changing their practices and measuring those changes; hence the tag line, “You can, You count”. Participants are asked to pledge to commit to at least three of six actions that will reduce pollution emissions, conserve energy and water, and lead to a healthier environment. So far, over 3,000 individuals and 30 businesses have taken the Mpower Pledge to take a variety of steps toward carbon emission reductions.

The City of Madison component of the campaign calls for city government to reduce its CO2 "footprint" by 25% by 2011, eliminating CO2, through the following strategies:

- Increase the energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at city facilities. The city has installed four PV systems and all 11 fire stations are equipped with hot water solar. The City's PV and Solar Thermal systems remove 42.4 tons of CO2 from the environment.
- Purchase more energy from renewable sources such as wind and solar.
- Increase fuel efficiency and biofuel usage in the city's fleet of vehicles. The city is pursuing this goal by establishing fuel-efficiency standards, using hybrid diesel-electric buses and experimentation with biodiesel fuels.

“The City of Madison continues working to lead by example, making use of solar technologies, increasing efficiency and reducing our carbon footprint,” Mayor Dave Cieslewicz said. “But by providing local businesses with resources and support, this initiative will help create new partners in this work and expand our community’s commitment to sustainability as a whole.”

Accomplishment that the Mpower partners have put into place to reduce CO2 emissions since the launch of the campaign include:

- The University of Wisconsin’s WE CONSERVE initiative has saved \$4.6 million in annual energy cost savings and achieved an annual CO2 emission reduction of 37,000 tons per year and an annual water usage reduction of 170,000,000 gallons.
- The MadiSUN program has had over 275 people seek assistance in getting solar installed on their home or business, currently six people are getting quotes from installers and 2 people have installed systems since June.
- MPower participants in Madison Gas and Electric’s Green Power tomorrow program are saving approximately 28,000 tons of CO2 per year through their purchases of renewable wind and solar power.

A variety of businesses will be chosen to participate in the Mpower Champions program—no business is too large or too small and non-profit organizations will be considered.

MPOWER BUSINESS CHAMPION

Only business located in the Madison area are eligible to apply. Businesses do not need a track record of sustainability, only to demonstrate a commitment to actively participate. Business seeking to participate in the new effort should visit <http://www.mpoweringmadison.com/champion> to get an application. Completed applications are due by December 31st and selection of participants will be completed in early January.

“Not only do we expect this effort to have a significant impact on the environment and economically benefit those business that are chosen, the fact that Wal-Mart, Home Depot and McDonald’s and so many more Fortune 500’s have major sustainability efforts underway indicates the necessity of sustainable business practices to economic vitality in the 21st Century” said Bryant Moroder, Executive Director of Sustain Dane. “This a unique opportunity for area business to make significant commitment and strides towards sustainability so they don’t end up being left behind.”

####