

## **Region 15 School District Learning How to Save Energy and Money**

BY RICK HARRISON Waterbury Republican American November 13, 2009

After hearing an energy conservation company's sales pitch two years ago, Keith McLiverty experienced a common bout of doubt. "I was scratching my head," said McLiverty, director of finance for the Region 15 school district, which includes Southbury and Middlebury. "There's no way, come on, why isn't everyone doing this. Turns out it's real." Last year the company helped the district save \$438,000, almost 19 percent of its total energy costs, McLiverty said. Consumption decreased by as little as 7 percent in one building to as much as 25 percent in another. "Some things may be too good to be true," McLiverty said. "And some things aren't."

This week, neighboring Region 14 joined 10 other Connecticut school districts that have signed contracts with Energy Education, a Texas-based company that uses a proprietary management process to assess, plan, coordinate, lead and verify a program designed for each district to achieve up to 30 percent reductions in energy use. For Region 14, which includes Woodbury and Bethlehem, the company projects potential savings of \$2.5 million over 10 years, a possible reduction of 15.6 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions. And while the savings are only estimates, the company guarantees that its fees will result in some savings or it will write a check for the difference. "We said this is too good to be true," said Region 14 Director of Fiscal Service Jay Hubelbank. "Then I called the people I knew. They said this is no joke. People I really trust." Michael J. Santogatta, business manager for Plymouth's school district, said he has already begun to see measurable results after starting to work with the company in September.

The company has sent electricity, air management and heating specialists to examine the town's systems and work with a newly hired energy efficiency manager to tweak equipment and instruct employees on how to minimize usage. "It's an educational program to teach everyone from the ground up how to run energy efficient buildings," Santogatta said.

## **Regional School District 15**

### **Excerpt from Finance Committee Meeting Minutes September 16, 2009**

The Region is starting the new year off in a positive mode. The year-to-date savings for the Energy Management Program, through June 30th of last fiscal year, was \$349,000.00 as a result of the changes made. At the next meeting the Region will share the savings achieved in the summer months, due to the Energy Management Program. Ms. Kelley Gurvis asked what line items would show savings. Mr. McLiverty stated there will be a surplus in the oil and electricity line items. Due to the program, the Region has double digit savings, except for one location.

Also, the Region made some investments in the HVAC system from the savings and purchased a pool cover to save on energy. The pool is heated by oil and without a pool cover the heater would run twice a day, every day, and once at night to heat the water. By putting a pool cover in, the first thing that happens is the heat stays in the water and you do not have to heat the water as often because the heat is retained in the water, less chlorine and water is being used. Additionally, without the pool cover the heat would rise and when people sat on the bleachers it was too hot and we would try to cool that area also.

There are calculated returns that were done by UI and Energy Education and it was the experts who had recommended the pool cover. Dr. Kenneth Paddyfote suggested the Region sends Energy Education a thank you note for the wonderful job they have done with the savings through their program.

On a motion by Mr. Joseph Rock, seconded by Ms. Kelley Gurvis,

IT WAS VOTED

“To accept the financial report as presented”. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Energy Savings Reported to Plymouth Board**

Bristol Press January 13, 2010 BY FREESIA SINGNGAM - STAFF WRITER

PLYMOUTH — The school district’s new Energy Education specialist, Martin Sandshaw, gave a presentation to the Board of Education Wednesday night, highlighting new initiatives to save energy – and money. He said that he and the Energy Education, the organization he’s working with, have studied the school buildings and found several ways to cut down on energy. For one thing, Terryville High School is now staggering its rooftop energy units. Also, the heating system won’t kick in on days school isn’t in session unless the temperature drops to 55 degrees. Sandshaw noted that they “haven’t found a building that’s gone down to 55 degrees yet with the cold snap.”

He added that Energy Education has certain guidelines for heat. For example, the schools should operate between 68 and 72 degrees. Sandshaw said those are the temperatures he’s “shooting for.” The district has also purchased timers for the vending machines, under Sandshaw and Energy Education’s suggestion. The units cost \$200 each, but Connecticut Light & Power is reimbursing the district \$75 for each unit, and it should save \$200 worth of electricity each year. Superintendent of Schools Anthony Distasio said the district started this program this year to “really ratchet down what we’re spending in our district in terms of energy.”

Sandshaw, who was also elected to the Town Council in November, was hired as the district’s energy education specialist in August. At the August Board of Education meeting when Sandshaw was approved, Business Manager Michael Santogatta said Sandshaw is a retired Pratt & Whitney employee who has a master’s degree in environmental science, which qualifies him for this position. He will be paid with a stipend from the money he can save the district. Distasio said the district hired Sandshaw to work with Energy Education, which promises to save the district \$250,000 over 10 years. The Board of Education is paying Energy Education for the program, and Sandshaw is being paid by Energy Education.