



Fort Collins companies join energy challenge

Avago, New Belgium, Woodward sign up for program

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July 23, 2010

Three Fort Collins companies have joined the "Colorado Industrial Energy Challenge" in an effort to help cut down on energy consumption.

Gov. Bill Ritter on Thursday launched the program that challenges 13 companies to reduce energy use at their respective manufacturing facilities.

Included in the program are Fort Collins-based Avago Technologies, New Belgium Brewing Co. and Woodward.

"These companies are strong partners in our work to make Colorado a world leader in energy efficiency and clean-tech innovations," Ritter said in a prepared statement. "Reducing energy consumption isn't just good for the environment, it also will help these companies stay competitive, create jobs, increase America's energy security and strengthen Colorado's New Energy Economy."

The Colorado Industrial Energy Challenge is open to any industrial company that spends more than \$200,000 a year on energy costs.

To join the program, companies agree to set a five-year goal of reducing energy use, reporting total energy consumption for the base year and in following years demonstrating progress. By joining the program, companies can receive free technical assistance from CSU to achieve its energy reduction goals.

Neil Kolwey, senior associate with the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project, said when it came to finding Colorado companies to participate, Fort Collins was already ahead of the game. He attributed this, in part, to the city's ClimateWise program, a voluntary city program dedicated to helping local businesses and the environment.

"The companies in Fort Collins just seemed a little bit more open-minded and willing to go ahead and participate," Kolwey said. "Companies have a lot of potential to save energy, and some are doing a great job already."

Kolwey said the only other Fort Collins company that would qualify for the challenge, and has shown interest, is Anheuser-Busch.

Jennifer Orgolini, sustainability director for New Belgium Brewing Co., said in a prepared statement the energy challenge "inspired us to set a compelling goal, and we wanted to join with the community of Colorado industries in asserting the importance of energy-use reduction."

The program is expected to help bring more attention to the efforts of companies like New Belgium and Woodward and what they are doing to reduce their carbon footprint.

"This program will help us elevate the status and visibility of our energy-efficiency efforts," said Jerry Becker in a prepared statement. Becker is facility manager for Woodward, an energy control technologies manufacturer headquartered in Fort Collins. "We are developing a paradigm shift at Woodward, where facilities and maintenance staff become a profit center rather than a drain on the bottom line."

The Governor's Energy Office is sponsoring the program and funding it through a \$900,000 competitive grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

That money will be used to help fund the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project, which is leading and coordinating the program on behalf of Governor's Energy Office, as well as to assist companies that need training or systems updates.

Todd Hartman, spokesman for the Governor's Energy Office, said the hope is that other Colorado industrial companies will follow the lead of the charter members and join the pledge to reduce their energy use.

If all companies in Colorado with an industrial facility cut their energy consumption by 10 percent in the next five years, it would save \$200 million a year in utility bills, the equivalent of taking 330,000 cars off the road, Hartman said.

Kolwey said industrial companies account for 27 percent of the electricity and natural gas used in the state.

He said companies will be looking to reduce their energy bills by working on such areas as air and fan systems, boilers, furnaces, and steam or heating systems.

"We compete in a global market, and in order to excel, we must be efficient in everything we do," said Steve Wolley in a prepared statement. Wolley is workplace services manager at Avago Technologies, a semi-conductor device manufacturer in Fort Collins. "Joining the challenge will serve as a catalyst to keep us moving forward in our objective of saving on natural resources."

Colorado State University's Industrial Assessment Center will provide most of the technical assistance to partner companies, with additional technical support from the ETC Group, a Salt Lake City-based environmental engineering firm.

Other charter members include: Amgen, Aspen Skiing Co., Crested Butte Mountain Resort, Encana, Frito-Lay, MillerCoors, Roche Colorado Corp., Rocky Mountain Bottle Co., Rocky Mountain Metal Container and Sandoz.

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