

AIR CURRENTS

Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air Newsletter

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WPCA Message from the Chair

It is with both sadness and pride that we deliver the news that after 22 years, the Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air has made the decision to dissolve. This action was precipitated by the recent and planned departures of the coalition's facilitating and support staff provided by the Wisconsin DNR.

On behalf of the steering committee, we are proud of the actions and efforts taken by our organization and members to improve air quality in Wisconsin. In this final newsletter issue, we would like to share a look back, alternative voluntary organization resources for consideration and a final *Success Spotlight* story.

Lorrie Lisek, WPCA Chair

Looking Back & Looking Up

In 1996, the Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air (WPCA) was formed as a voluntary coalition with the vision to enhance the quality of life for all individuals through the successful achievement of clean and healthy air achieved through comprehensive, voluntary community efforts. The goal of WPCA was to achieve Volatile Organic Chemical (VOC) reductions of 1.9 tons per hot summer day.

WPCA replaced a mandated federal program called the Employee Commute Options (ECO), which was an employer trip reduction effort that required large employers in severe ozone nonattainment areas to submit plans to reduce single occupancy vehicles. Over the years, WPCA grew to a 250-member statewide organization, which included the initial employers under the ECO Program and participants in the former Ozone Action Day Program, among many others.

WPCA's steering committee included representatives from business, industry and government in southeastern Wisconsin, and support staff from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce provided leadership for the first 16 years, followed by three different non-profit organizations. The coalition developed several outreach projects and programs, along with an annual award recognition event that showcased efforts undertaken by WPCA members.

Air quality in Wisconsin has continued to improve over the years. For example, SO₂ emissions from sources like power plants, paper mills, and other industrial facilities decreased 77 percent statewide in just six years. In addition, the pollutants that form ozone have decreased by 50 percent in the last 15 years. Finally, over the last decade, fine particle concentrations have decreased by 30 percent.

Although the WPCA voluntary reductions have never been quantified, the efforts undertaken by coalition members have certainly contributed to improvements in air quality, so remember...

It All Adds Up to Clean Air!

Voluntary Program Resources



Cool Choices is an innovative sustainability engagement program that inspires people to adopt sustainable practices at work and home.
<https://coolchoices.com/#>



Green Masters Program is a recognition and assessment program for Wisconsin businesses interested in improving and being recognized for their sustainability initiatives.
<https://www.wisconsinsustainability.com/>

GREEN TIER

Green Tier invites you to become part of growing a green bottom line:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/GreenTier/>



SmartWay is an EPA program that helps companies advance supply chain sustainability by measuring, benchmarking, and improving freight transportation efficiency.
<https://www.epa.gov/smartway>



Wisconsin Clean Cities promotes the use of alternative fuels and technologies and improve air quality.
<http://wicleancities.org/>



Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air

Success Spotlight:

American Family Insurance

American Family Insurance preparing a bright future

American Family Insurance is headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin and celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2017. With agents in 19 states, American Family Insurance is the nation's 13th-largest property/casualty insurance group, ranks No. 315 on the Fortune 500 list and employs 4,500 people in Madison and 8,700 nationwide.

American Family Insurance put nearly 4,500 solar panels into operation in 2017 on its National Headquarters (NHQ) building in Madison. At the time of completion, it was the largest single rooftop solar array in the state. SunPeak, a Madison-based commercial solar developer, was American Family's partner for this project. The installation is estimated to produce approximately 1.26 million kilowatts annually, which is enough energy to power 122 average-sized homes, or 874,000 60-watt light bulbs for one day. The panels have a service life of 30 years and no moving parts to wear out or replace, requiring little maintenance. The system is projected to offset six to nine percent of the building's electrical usage, saving approximately \$191,000 in annual energy costs.

In addition, the solar installation is expected to offset approximately 1.7 million pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas annually and 51 million pounds of CO₂ over the course of its 30-year service life. This is equal to the yearly emissions of roughly 213 automobiles.

Solar photovoltaic (PV) systems use the sun's rays to generate electricity in a quiet, renewable manner. The system installed at American Family's NHQ uses a "delta wing" (east/west orientation) solar panel configuration. This creates a chevron-like pattern that maximizes solar density on a flat roof, without the need for a southern-facing exposure.

The solar panel installation is just the latest in several sustainability projects American Family Insurance has implemented in its dedication to environmental stewardship and social responsibility. The company seeks a zero-waste future, diverting 90 percent or more waste away from landfills and conducts native prairie restorations at the NHQ location as part of the company's sustainable land management program. American Family also utilizes high-efficiency lighting at all offices, saves 4.5 million gallons of water through redesign of refrigeration and cooling systems, along with assessing and recalibration of HVAC controls and settings.

"American Family Insurance has made a commitment to sustainability by implementing projects and initiatives that protect our environment and contribute to the well-being of our communities," said Dan Rosetta, American Family Insurance facilities operations director.

"Conserving energy and utilizing renewable energy reaffirms our commitment to the environment while also reducing our operating costs, and that means we can better meet the needs of our customers."



Photo: SunPeak

Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air Past Accomplishments & Activities

- ◆ *Annual award recognition event*
- ◆ *Ozone Action! Day- followed by Air Quality Watch and Advisories*
- ◆ *Development and distribution of member newsletter*
- ◆ *WPCA website development and management*
- ◆ *It All Adds Up to Clean Air Campaigns- variety of outreach material, radio ads and activities*
- ◆ *Air Quality Index Hotline – promoted through publications and magnets*
- ◆ *School + Business=Clean Air poster and magnet contest*
- ◆ *Air Quality and WPCA publications and exhibits*
- ◆ *Annual distribution of air quality resource kits*
- ◆ *UW-Milwaukee free bike loan project*
- ◆ *Gas cap wrench project*
- ◆ *Diesel school bus retrofit project*
- ◆ *Public transit bus ads*
- ◆ *ECO Drive project – gasoline pump-topper ads, exhibit and training curriculum*
- ◆ *EPA SmartWay affiliate*

Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air - a coalition committed to improving air quality through voluntary action.

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