



NEWS & INFORMATION

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Mason City Jaycees' Leadership Promotes Weatherization in North Central Iowa

The Mason City Jaycees are promoting energy efficiency and home weatherization in north central Iowa this fall and have been awarded a \$500 matching grant from the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) for their local leadership. This group plans to weatherize homes in Mason City to help local residents conserve energy, improve their comfort, and lower winter heating bills.

"The Mason City Jaycees, through their efforts, are raising awareness of the fact that most homeowners can take some simple steps prior to this winter heating season to save energy and money," said IUB Chairman John Norris.

The IUB is the state agency leading the Iowa Weatherization Challenge (IWC), which encourages groups and organizations statewide to undertake projects to weatherize homes in their local communities. The Mason City Jaycees are scheduled to do this on Saturday, October 21, 2006. Community weatherization projects raise public awareness of energy efficiency benefits and techniques while helping low-income, elderly, and disabled Iowans.

One of the easiest things anyone can do to reduce energy use is to seal air leaks on a home's exterior walls using caulk and weatherstripping materials, which are relatively inexpensive and available at hardware and department stores.

The Mason City Jaycees serve as a good example of how to plan a local community project. They have partnered with the United Way of North Central Iowa to identify and target low-income recipients. Along with volunteers from their own organization, they intend to incorporate community members that volunteer as a result of publicizing their project. Mason City Jaycees members with construction background and expertise will provide local volunteers with basic weatherization training and serve as team leaders at various house sites.

The IUB is receiving applications for matching grants of up to \$500 through November 1, 2006, to assist qualified Iowa community groups with their energy-saving projects. The grant money is to be used for expenses related to weatherization and educational materials. Grant application forms, along with requirements and instructions, are available at www.state.ia.us/iub.

Groups or organizations interested in participating in the IWC may obtain a complete organizing kit from the IUB Web site. The IUB offers educational presentations to groups and organizations in their local communities. Those interested in this may contact Teresa McConnell of the IUB toll free, 1-877-565-4451.

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