



# NEWS & INFORMATION

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## **IUB and local community volunteers make Iowa Weatherization Challenge successful**

The success of the 2006 Iowa Weatherization Challenge means greater dollar and energy savings for many Iowa citizens most needing the help. Local volunteers completed dozens of weatherization projects across the state, benefiting low-income families, elderly, disabled individuals, and others most in need of such assistance in their communities.

“So many community groups, organizations, and individuals rose to the challenge to save energy and money for everyone while spreading the word about the benefits of weatherization and energy efficiency,” said Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) Chairman John Norris. “It is very encouraging to see the generosity of Iowans at work in our local communities. The rewards of their efforts will be realized immediately as winter weather arrives and will also be ongoing as this initiative moves forward.”

The IUB is the state agency that coordinates the Iowa Weatherization Challenge, an initiative that encourages and supports groups and organizations statewide in undertaking these projects to weatherize homes in their local communities. Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack initiated the Iowa Weatherization Challenge in 2005.

The IUB approved the matching grant applications of 13 groups for their weatherization projects. These included the Mason City Jaycees, the Marshalltown Jaycees, the Council Bluffs Jaycees, the Bettendorf Chamber of Commerce (Iowa Quad Cities), Heartland Habitat For Humanity (Cedar Valley/Waterloo), Mississippi Valley Promise and Opening Doors/Maria House (Dubuque), the Central Iowa Retired Senior Volunteer Program (Story City), as well as the Neighborhood Association, Inc., Northwest Neighbors Association, Oak Hill Jackson Neighborhood Association, Taylor Area Neighborhood Association, and Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association (all in Cedar Rapids). To qualify for up to \$500 in matching grants, participating groups or organizations raised funds or solicited donations in their local communities. To date, approximately \$10,000 in fundraising dollars and matching grants has been invested in weatherization efforts and/or educational materials.

Iowa's energy utility companies have been supportive of the Iowa Weatherization Challenge's goals and efforts. Alliant Energy Company offered \$500 grants to groups sponsoring weatherization events in areas served by its Iowa subsidiary, Interstate Power and Light Company. MidAmerican Energy Company assisted the Bettendorf Chamber of Commerce in its project in the Quad Cities. Aquila Networks partnered with local community groups to conduct successful weatherization projects in Newton, West Union, Manchester, Waukon, Maquoketa, Council Bluffs, Glenwood, Webster City, Onawa, Denison, Grundy Center, Forest City, Estherville, and Pocahontas. All community weatherization projects, whether certified under the IUB matching grant program or not, raised public awareness to help promote ongoing energy efficiency efforts statewide.

**(MORE)**

On July 31, 2006, the IUB formally announced the start of the 2006 Iowa Weatherization Challenge as part of Iowa's efforts related to a national action plan to increase energy efficiency. To kick off the Iowa Weatherization Challenge, the IUB provided educational presentations to many interested groups and organizations in their communities. The presentations discussed various impacts of high-cost energy, but focused largely on the positive impacts Iowans can achieve through organized and cooperative energy efficiency planning and grassroots efforts in their local community. More specifically, IUB staff members discussed practical ways to complete successful weatherization projects and how the IUB could help them. This included information on how to recruit volunteers, raise funds, apply for an IUB matching grant, identify households or neighborhoods for weatherization, coordinate training, and work with other organizations and the media.

On August 29, 2006, IUB staff trainees weatherized two Des Moines houses to gain firsthand experience, which later helped them train volunteer groups across Iowa on effective means of weatherizing homes in their local communities. The IUB looks forward to continuing this work with local community organizations across Iowa in the future. Specific details about the Iowa Weatherization Challenge are available on the IUB Web site, [www.state.ia.us/iub](http://www.state.ia.us/iub). Persons seeking additional information or having questions may call of the IUB toll free, 1-877-565-4451.

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