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Wisconsin Company Takes Biomass Energy Action, Eliminates Need for Natural Gas. Wood-fired boiler system will reduce fossil fuel consumption, lower energy bills and protect the environment.

MERCER, Wis. (Jan. 6, 2009) - With the help of Focus on Energy, Action Floor Systems, LLC, a manufacturer and worldwide distributor of sport facility wood floors, recently installed a wood-fired boiler system at the company's headquarters in Mercer, Wis. The boiler system, which was completed in November 2008, eliminates the need for natural gas in the company's manufacturing process and also meets the space heating needs of the facility.

"The installation of the system made sense for our company, as it replaced an outdated system that was becoming increasingly inefficient and required a lot of maintenance," said Karl Anderson, plant manager for Action Floor Systems. "More importantly it helped us comply with environmental codes, and will save the company a significant amount of money in operating cost down the road."

The completion of the wood-fired boiler system is due in part to technical assistance and a \$200,000 Implementation Grant from Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative. The project represents a total investment of \$1,055,000, and has a projected payback period of about three and a half years when compared to the alternative of using natural gas to meet facility needs. The wood-fired boiler system will offset 658,300 therms of natural gas, enough energy to heat nearly 700 homes.

According to Anderson, the new wood-fired boiler system is used to produce steam for the wood-drying kilns and the buildings' heating systems. Residual waste wood left from their manufacturing process is used to power the system. Previously the company was using two boiler systems. One was a natural gas-fired system and the other a 50-year-old wood-fired boiler. Due to limited steam generating capabilities and breakdowns of the wood-fired system, operation of the gas-fired boiler was routinely required to satisfy a portion or all of the steam demand. Because of obvious inefficiencies of the previous system, Action Floor Systems decided a new wood-fired boiler that satisfied the entire facility's steam demand was a smart investment.

"The renewable energy industry is booming, and as technology continues to improve and costs come down, it is my hope more businesses in Wisconsin will take Action Floor Systems' lead," said Don Wichert, program director for Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program. "In addition to reducing their energy bills, their renewable energy system is a beacon of their environmental responsibility."

Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program strives to make renewable energy an attainable option in Wisconsin by encouraging residents and businesses to investigate and take advantage of renewable energy sources. The program educates residents and business owners about renewable energy choices, provides training and financing, promotes technical assistance and supports the installation of renewable energy technologies across Wisconsin.

To learn more about Focus on Energy and its Renewable Energy Program, or to find out if you qualify for financial incentives, call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

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