

## A Message from the Director



By Mark Redsten, Executive Director

At Clean Wisconsin, we understand the challenges state residents face in these tough economic times. With unemployment at its highest rate in decades and ascending rapidly, it's clear that something must be done to provide relief from the deepening recession. Luckily, improving our economy need not come at the expense of our environment, as has happened all too often in the past.

These are times of great challenge, but also times of great opportunity. Understanding this opportunity, our staff works diligently every day, advocating for policies that not only improve our environment, but also provide relief by creating family-supporting jobs for hard-working Wisconsinites.

Through our Great Lakes Restoration campaign, we seek to put thousands of Wisconsinites to work researching and restoring our magnificent lakes. Our Global Warming and Clean Energy campaigns seek not only to clean Wisconsin's environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also to create jobs in the research, production and maintenance of clean energy technologies like wind turbines, biofuel plants and solar panels. By acting now, our state can become a leader in this rapidly growing industry that promises to be an economic powerhouse of the future.

These are just a few examples of the many campaigns we are currently working on that will not only protect our beautiful environment, but also create jobs and provide relief from these tough economic times.

With the support of our members, we will continue to work every day to put Wisconsinites to work improving our environment and protecting the special places that make Wisconsin such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

## Rosendale Dairy Issued Wastewater Permit

By Melissa Malott, Water Program Director

Clean Wisconsin was disappointed to learn that Rosendale Dairy was issued a wastewater permit at the end of February. Rosendale Dairy is proposing to build the largest factory farm in the state and is now permitted to get halfway there. The risks this farm poses to the local water and air quality are serious. They will be land-spreading 46 million gallons of manure per year on local lands, and we believe this manure will contaminate ground water and local rivers and streams.

Across our nation, but especially in our state and neighboring states, pollution from agriculture is the primary cause of impairment to waterways. Agricultural producers are able to easily externalize the costs of dealing with manure by failing to adequately and legally take care of it. These farming practices release contamination like sediment, nutrients, hormones and pesticides into our waterways. In the Yahara Lakes system in Dane County, agriculture contributes about 75 percent of the phosphorus pollution to our lakes. The Yahara Lakes watershed is nestled in urban and rural areas, so if agricultural pollution is this

bad here, we can imagine it is worse in more rural counties. Phosphorus makes plants grow, and too much phosphorus in waterways causes plants and algae to grow and decay, which leads to eutrophication.

Eutrophication can disrupt ecosystems, which in itself is harmful, but eutrophication can also lead to dangerous problems with toxic algae. Wisconsin is the first state in which a human died due to exposure to toxic algae from runoff. In more recent years, agricultural runoff has led to algae problems that have made people sick in the Wisconsin River and other Wisconsin waterways.

Beyond the human health hazard that agricultural runoff creates, eutrophication problems are costing our state hundreds of millions of dollars per year in lost fishing and boating opportunities and in decreased property values. A January report from the University of Kansas found that "Human-induced eutrophication degrades freshwater systems worldwide by reducing water quality and altering

*continued on page 4*

## Electronic Waste Help keep it out of landfills

By Amber Meyer Smith, Program Director and David Vitse, Office Administrator

Almost 400 pounds of broken and outdated computers, monitors, floppy disks, printers, cords, CD-ROMs and other various electronic devices were given a ceremonious exit from the Clean Wisconsin office by Applied Tech and File 13 on February 20 in order to be properly recycled using environmentally responsible methods employed by File 13 at its Verona offices.

"Partnering with these local companies that share Clean Wisconsin's vision to 'walk the talk' by utilizing responsible business practices – in this case, electronic waste recycling – clearly shows that by working together, all industries can make a positive impact on a rapidly growing environmental issue," said Clean Wisconsin Executive Director Mark Redsten.

In fact, Clean Wisconsin is supporting a bill that allows for easier recycling of electronic waste in Wisconsin. Senator Mark

*continued on page 5*



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# TAKING & CHARGE TAKING & ACTION

Below are some of the actions you can take to help protect Wisconsin's clean water, clean air and clean energy.

## Use GoodSearch to help Clean Wisconsin

With a few simple clicks, you can help Clean Wisconsin by using GoodSearch. GoodSearch is a search engine which donates 50 percent of its revenue to the charities and schools designated by its users.

You use GoodSearch exactly as you would any other search engine (like Google) and because it's powered by Yahoo!, you get proven search results. The money GoodSearch donates comes from its advertisers – users and the organizations do not spend a dime! (This comes to about one cent for every search.)



Setting GoodSearch as your homepage is easy. Simply go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), then, on the top tool bar, Tools – Options – and select “Use Current Page” to set your home page. Next, set Clean Wisconsin as your selected organization by simply typing “Clean Wisconsin” under the “Who Do You Search For” bar and hit “verify.”

## Electronic Waste: Responsible disposal of your old television sets and computers

Senator Mark Miller (D-Monona) and Representative Penny Bernard Schaber (D-Appleton) recently worked together on legislation that will promote the recycling of electronic devices like televisions and computers (Senate Bill 107). This legislation ensures discarded electronic equipment such as televisions and computers do not end up in our landfills.

Please contact your state legislators today and let them know that you support passage of Senate Bill 107 and expect this long-overdue legislation to become law this session.



## Sign our Clean Energy Economy bill petition

This year, the Wisconsin State Legislature has the opportunity to create a cleaner future and stronger economy by passing the strong Clean Energy Economy Bill. The bill will promote renewable energy, support smart transportation options, help address global warming and reduce our dependence on imported fossil fuels.

Passing this bill won't be easy. Lobbyists for the oil and coal industries are working hard to defeat this bill and keep us dependent on dirty sources of energy. Your legislators are hearing from the opposition, now they need to hear from YOU! Tell them to promote energy independence and support renewable energy NOW!

**Please go to our Web site to sign our petition to your legislator to support the strong Clean Energy Economy Bill.**

[www.cleanwisconsin.org/action/globalwarmingPetition\\_0209.html](http://www.cleanwisconsin.org/action/globalwarmingPetition_0209.html)

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Clean Wisconsin, an environmental advocacy organization, protects Wisconsin's clean water and air and advocates for clean energy by being an effective voice in the state legislature and by holding elected officials and polluters accountable. Founded in 1970 as Wisconsin's Environmental Decade, Clean Wisconsin exposes corporate polluters, makes sure existing environmental laws are enforced, and educates citizens and businesses. On behalf of its 10,000 members and its coalition partners, Clean Wisconsin protects the special places that make Wisconsin such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

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# *Clean Wisconsin Legislative Agenda*

*The latest developments on environmental priorities*

The Wisconsin State Legislature is in full swing and acting quickly on several Clean Wisconsin priorities. Tracking the progress of legislation and the budget is keeping the Clean Wisconsin program staff busy.

## **Phosphorus Restrictions: Protecting the quality of our waterways**

Assembly Bill 3/Senate Bill 5, which restricts the use of fertilizer containing phosphorus, is sailing through the Legislature. As of the writing of this article, the bill has already received unanimous approval in the Assembly and only awaits a vote of the full Senate before being sent to the Governor for his signature to become law. Clean Wisconsin thanks the bipartisan bill authors – Senators Mark Miller (D-Monona) and Rob Cowles (R-Green Bay) and Representatives Spencer Black (D-Madison) and Garey Bies (R-Sister Bay) – for speedy action on this important environmental priority.

## **Global Warming**

Clean Wisconsin will continue our advocacy for strong global warming legislation this session. Passage of the Governor's Global Warming Task Force recommendations into law will ensure Wisconsin is poised to become a leader in the clean energy economy and capture the potential 37,000 family-supporting jobs that a recent study showed could be created in our state with an investment in renewable energy.

You can take action now by signing the petition to support the strong Clean Energy Economy bill to fight global warming at Clean Wisconsin's Web site, [www.CleanWisconsin.org](http://www.CleanWisconsin.org). This bill will need strong support from citizens when it is introduced, so your early action on this petition will help show the incredible commitment Wisconsin citizens have to reducing global warming.

## **Electronic Waste: Responsible disposal of your old TVs and computers**

Senators Mark Miller (D-Monona) and Representative Penny Bernard Schaber (D-Appleton) have collaborated on an Electronic Waste bill, now introduced as Senate Bill 107. This legislation ensures discarded electronic equipment such as televisions and computers do not end up in our landfills.

Please contact your state legislators today and let them know that you support passage of Senate Bill 107 and that you expect this long-overdue legislation to become law this session.

You can follow the progress of any bill by visiting the State Legislature's website at: [www.legis.wi.gov](http://www.legis.wi.gov)

## **State Budget**

In February, Governor Doyle unveiled his budget, and much of the spring will be devoted to working on the budget bill; advocating for environmental priorities and trying to minimize the pain to important programs in the face of \$5.7 billion deficit. Even with a shortfall, there are several important programs that Clean Wisconsin will be supporting.

## **Commitment to the Great Lakes**

Governor Doyle has continued his commitment to the Great Lakes by including four staff positions to administer the Great Lakes Compact. These staff positions at the DNR will ensure the proper enactment of the Compact provisions for protection of our precious Great Lakes. Similarly, the Governor added staff to regulate ballast water from ocean-going ships to prevent the further spread of invasive species in the Great Lakes.

## **Decreasing Out-of-State Trash**

Governor Doyle also included an increase to the garbage tipping fee in his budget. A tipping fee is paid by garbage haulers when they dump their waste at a landfill. Wisconsin's tipping fee is low compared to surrounding states, making us a cheaper alternative for out-of-state waste dumping. This increased tipping fee proposal will not only help stop filling our landfills with neighboring state's trash, but the proceeds go, in part, to the University of Wisconsin Bioenergy Center and continued funding for environmental quality and remediation programs.

## **Transportation Initiatives**

Building on recommendations of his Global Warming Task Force, Governor Doyle included the creation of regional transit authorities in southeastern Wisconsin, Dane County and the Fox Valley in his budget. This provision will allow regions to plan for sustainable communities that aren't solely reliant on automobiles for transportation. Governor Doyle also included a plan for passenger rail services that would help reduce our dependence on oil and reduce global warming pollution.

The budget seeks to address the \$5.7 billion deficit, in part, with \$2.2 billion in spending cuts, as well as cuts to all state agencies. Clean Wisconsin is analyzing those cuts to understand the full impact to environmental programs and find where federal stimulus money might be appropriate to plug some of the holes left by the state deficit.

# Household Energy Efficiency and Conservation

By Peter Taglia, Staff Scientist

Whether we use energy for transportation, heating or to power home lights and appliances, the first step to reducing our environmental footprint is to cut the waste with energy efficiency and conservation. Most people have at least a vague idea of how the efficiency of different vehicles compare (for example, a Hummer versus a hybrid), and know that biking or taking the train uses less energy than driving, but the amount of energy that is used by a *home* is much less familiar to the average citizen. If you were asked how many kilowatt-hours of electrical energy or therms of natural gas your household used last month, what would you guess? We've been asking that question a lot here at Clean Wisconsin and by looking at our own household energy use, we are able to practice what we preach and advocate for more effective energy policies.

There are many ways to identify wasted energy in a house, from infrared cameras to sophisticated door pressure fans, but a good place to start is by looking at your utility bills. By comparing how your energy use changes over the seasons and how much more or less energy your household uses compared to your neighbors, you can identify where to focus your efforts and when to give yourself a pat on the back. We recently compared household energy use around the office, and I was pleased to find that I won the contest for lowest energy use! Of course, I had been working hard to increase the efficiency of my home, but we have also been participating in an energy study group with five other families that have allowed us to compare our household energy consumption and share energy successes and challenges.

Many utilities allow customers to view their energy use online, even graph their energy consumption month-by-month and account for the weather. But some utilities have found that by giving customers a



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comparison of their energy use with other customers in similar houses, they encourage people to reach a little further. One utility in Sacramento found that by simply adding a personalized report to a utility bill to show how that household's energy use compared to the average household, customers would reduce energy 2-percent more than customers without the personalized report. Taking this concept one step further by comparing and discussing energy bills with a network of friends or neighbors not only helps people to learn, but also taps into our natural tendency to compete.

My own network of six families has been working to save energy for over a year and the results are impres-

sive. In 2008, we collectively saved an average of 739 kWh per month of electricity and 259 therms of gas. That's the equivalent of taking one whole household off the grid! Most of us had already switched our lightbulbs to compact fluorescents and use a programmable thermostat to lower our heating and cooling costs when we sleep, but by comparing our bills and sharing experiences we all learned new ways to save.

Two of the biggest energy savers we've realized are:

- Electric dryers were one of the biggest energy hogs and one family found that by using a clothesline for most of their drying (and adding a fabric softener to the washer) their bill dropped considerably. (They also liked the way their clothes felt!)
- Another family wondered why they used so much more gas than their neighbors despite having the same size home and thermostat settings. It turns out that their walls were un-insulated and their natural gas consumption dropped nearly 50 percent after hiring a contractor to blow insulation into the walls.

Peter's family of four has dropped their average monthly electrical consumption to 238 kWh and average monthly natural gas consumption to 29 therms through a combination of energy efficiency and conservation measures. While not every household can benefit from a breezy neighborhood with big shade trees (they don't use any air conditioning), with careful planning and modest investments, a surprising amount of energy can be saved even from a house built in 1916.

## Rosendale Dairy *continued from front page*

### the costs of DIRTY WATER

**\$3.96 billion**  
per year for the nation

Calculated total in losses to recreational opportunities and waterfront real estate and costs to restore threatened and endangered species and keep drinking water safe nationally

That translates into

**\$79.2 million**

per year per state

Given Wisconsin's more voluminous water resources, it would make sense that this number would be much larger in Wisconsin

ecosystem structure and function." Then, based on calculated losses to recreational opportunities, waterfront real estate, costs of restoring threatened and endangered species, and drinking water upkeep expenses, the report found that eutrophication costs our nation up to \$3.96 billion per year. If we divide this by 50 states to give us an approximation of what this would break down for Wisconsin, we come up with a potential cost of \$79.2 million per year. Given Wisconsin's more voluminous water resources, it would make sense that this number would be more much larger in Wisconsin.

Agricultural runoff is the biggest water quality problem in Wisconsin and is hurting our state citizens and economy. This is Clean Wisconsin's top water priority, and we are working closely with our coalition partners, but the agricultural lobby is very powerful, and we need your help. First, we need to educate our neighbors and families about the connection between what happens on the ground and how it ends up polluting our waters. Next, we need to demand our government and representatives protect our waters with better policies and strong enforcement.

We will continue to monitor Rosendale Dairy and any potential plans for expansion they might propose. We remain committed to working at the state and local levels to find solutions to this water-quality problem that ensure the health of our citizens and our environment is protected and will continue to update you on steps to take action to fight for clean water in Wisconsin.

# Answering Your Questions

## Clean Wisconsin's settlement agreement at Elm Road (ERGS)

By Katie Nekola, Energy Program Director

Last year, we announced our settlement agreement with WE Energies over the once-through cooling system at the new Elm Road Generating Station (ERGS) in Oak Creek. The settlement agreement included payment of \$100 million over the next 25 years for Lake Michigan restoration.

Since we announced the settlement, we've received many questions from members all over the state. Some members are concerned that our lawsuit and settlement "just costs rate payers more money."

To that end, we'd like to provide some details on the settlement.

To summarize the agreement, WE Energies and the other ERGS owners (Madison Gas and Electric and Wisconsin Public Power Inc.) agreed to fund \$4 million per year over the next 25 years, for a total of \$100 million, for projects that will improve the health of Lake Michigan, such as invasive species, polluted runoff, toxic loading and other issues. The funds will not be paid to Clean Wisconsin or Sierra Club, but will be held by an independent foundation that will fund proposals from others to do lake improvement projects. In fact, the environmental organizations did not, and will not, receive any money whatsoever from the settlement.

### Settlement details

The agreement requires WE Energies and Madison Gas & Electric (MGE) to either fund the projects from their own profits or ask the Public Service Commission to allow them to collect \$4 million per year from their customers. They are expected to make those requests this spring. There is no guarantee that the PSC will allow them to collect any or all of the \$4 million.

If you are a WE Energies customer, your portion of the \$4 million per year will amount to about 38 cents per month (calculated using an average residential electric bill) or \$4.56 per year. We believe that \$4.56 per year is not too much to pay for real work that will benefit all those who will enjoy Lake Michigan for decades to come. In contrast, the amount that customers' bill have increased to pay for the new Elm Road coal plant, and could continue to increase due to cost overruns, is much higher and will harm the lake and the air in southeastern Wisconsin. If you are an MGE customer, your share would be even less.

Of course, nobody wants their bills to increase at all, me included. When we decided to settle, we decided that the best compromise between trying to protect Lake Michigan from the harmful effects of this illegal cooling system and continuing an expensive legal battle was to reach an agreement where WE Energies would be allowed to use the cooling system they had built, but would provide funding for lake clean-up projects.

At Clean Wisconsin, we are dedicated to protecting our clean water and clean air and to promoting clean energy. We believe that, overall, our settlement agreement was a good resolution of our legal case and will help make it possible for families to continue to enjoy a healthy Lake Michigan for years to come.

## Electronic Waste *continued from front page*

Miller (D-Monona) and Representative Penny Bernard Schaber (D-Appleton) recently worked together on legislation that will promote the recycling of electronic devices like televisions and computers (Senate Bill 107). Electronic waste is the fastest-growing source of waste generated in the United States. With the digital TV conversion, the problem will only get worse.

Electronic devices contain valuable materials like gold, silver and copper. But they also contain highly toxic components like lead and cadmium. Capturing these materials for reuse in manufacturing will improve our economy through new business development and job creation, while reducing toxins in our landfills.

"Electronic recycling goes beyond just protecting the environment," states Julie Vike of Applied Tech. "As demand for electronic recycling continues, new businesses will form and existing companies will grow. This can be a direct increase to the economic stimulus by keeping jobs in the states."

Establishing a clear framework for the proper disposal of electronic waste is another important approach to restoring Wisconsin's fiscal and environmental integrity that government leaders, private individuals and businesses must practice. Clean Wisconsin is dedicated fully to leading this necessary pursuit.

### Educate yourself by knowing the facts

- Less than 10 percent of electronic waste is recycled properly.
- If the U.S. recycled all of its electronic waste, 20 million tons of electronic waste would be diverted from U.S. landfills.

### Find your area electronic waste recycle center

- Contact your local government about their recycling methods and drop off points.
- Contact your local electronic store about possible recycling places.

### Act locally, think nationally and globally

- Responsible electronic waste management in the U.S. will create jobs in the recycling, manufacturing and maintenance of electronic waste centers in Wisconsin and in the U.S.
- Many countries around the world are using electronic waste laborers who do not know or do not understand the danger of disassembling electronic waste.

"Facilitating the recycling of electronic waste is very exciting for Applied Tech. We are optimistic that Clean Wisconsin will help set the standard of how to properly dispose of electronics, not just for individuals but businesses as well."

Julie Vike, Marketing Manager, Applied Tech



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# Leading our Clean Energy Economy

## Clean Wisconsin spotlights companies

By Sarah Shanahan, Global Warming Program Associate

Wisconsin is home to many businesses that are leading our clean energy economy. These company spotlights include only a handful of the businesses that are driving clean energy, energy efficiency and renewable technology production. We selected these companies to represent a variety of avenues to reducing global warming emissions. These environmentally friendly companies produce everything from wind towers to plug-in electric hybrid batteries. They have already created thousands of jobs and bring millions of dollars to the state. Further investment in our clean energy economy will continue to bring jobs here and keep money in the state.

### **Baldwin Dairy**

Locations: Baldwin and Emerald  
What: Anaerobic digesters to produce biogas  
Employees: 100+

Wisconsin is well-known for its great dairy industry and one western Wisconsin farmer is dedicated to making dairies sustainable. John Vrieze, owner of three dairies in Baldwin and Emerald, Wisconsin, is using anaerobic digesters to convert manure into biogas. Some of the biogas is used for electricity at the dairy; some is pumped into the Northern Natural Gas pipeline, and some will power a state-of-the-art greenhouse, expected to be named Future Farms Food and Fuel LLC. The greenhouse will raise all-natural vegetables and tilapia on an aquaponics system, a closed system in which the waste products of one biological system provide sustenance for a second biological system. The greenhouse project is still under construction, but once completed it will create 10 to 12 jobs, in addition to the 100 people currently employed at the dairies. Vrieze also hopes to use biomass feedstock (such as spoiled feed or corn stalks) to produce biofuel that would be used for energy at colleges.

### **Cardinal Glass Industries**

Locations: Amery, Portage, Menomonie, Tomah, Spring Green  
What: Energy-Efficient and Solar Glass Technologies  
Employees: 1,800+

Cardinal Glass is helping to pave the way to a clean energy economy in Wisconsin. Whether you want energy-efficient windows, doors, solar panels or photovoltaic cells, Cardinal produces all these at plants located throughout the state. These products reduce energy usage and save consumers money. The company's latest technology in energy-efficient glass is the use of layers of silver which cut a building's energy usage up to 20 percent. Cardinal Glass's energy-efficient glass isn't the only thing that is environmentally friendly; they are also conscious of their own environmental impact and have aggressive glass, cardboard and plastic recycling programs. Wisconsin has a strong manufacturing base and is home to nearly 40 percent of Cardinal's nationwide plants. They employ 1,800 Wisconsinites at plants located in Amery, Menomonie, Portage, Tomah and Spring Green. There are also plans to open another plant in Mazomanie, creating an additional 120 jobs.

### **Johnson Controls, Inc.**

Locations: Glendale, Hudson, Madison, Milwaukee, Neenah, Onalaska, Waukesha  
What: Automotive Components, Power Solutions, Building Efficiency  
Employees: 2,500+

Johnson Controls, Inc. produces everything from environmentally friendly interior components for automobiles to energy-efficient products for buildings. One of their most innovative technologies, recently unveiled at the Detroit Auto Show, is a battery for plug-in electric hybrid vehicles. These lithium-ion batteries are lightweight and store twice the amount of energy as their nickel-hydride counterparts. They also have a slow loss of charge and no memory effect, meaning they will last longer. Partnering with Saft Advanced Power Solutions LLC, Johnson Controls received money from the Wisconsin Energy Independence Fund to develop their lithium-ion battery to power the next generation of plug-in electric hybrids. Wisconsin is home to eight of Johnson Controls worldwide businesses, with locations in Glendale, Hudson, Madison, Milwaukee, Neenah, Onalaska and Waukesha. They employ over 2,500 people here in Wisconsin. Worldwide, Johnson Controls has 140,000 employees and provide products and services to 200 million vehicles, 12 million homes and 1 million commercial buildings.

### **Major Industries, Inc.**

Location: Wausau  
What: Energy-Efficient Daylighting Solutions  
Employees: 100+

Harnessing the power of the sun, our homes can be made to be more energy efficient through the use of solar technology and natural daylighting solutions. For nearly 30 years, Major Industries has manufactured daylighting solution products including translucent glass, polycarbonate and acrylic skylights and translucent curtain wall systems. These daylighting solutions have numerous applications: They are great for retailers as they increase in-store signage visibility in an energy-efficient manner. When used in schools, daylighting has shown to improve test scores. Daylighting, in general, also reduces energy costs. All these examples save money. Major Industries has fitted a wide range of buildings in Wisconsin with their daylighting solutions, from installing skylights at the Supermax prison in Boscobel to fitting Wal-Marts with their translucent panels.

Major Industries, Inc. brings millions of dollars in the local economy through employment, purchasing local raw materials and utilizing local services. The plant in Wausau employs over 100 people.



### Orion Energy Systems, Inc.

Locations: Plymouth and Manitowoc  
Energy Efficient Lighting  
Employees: 250+

A local utility became alarmed once they noticed a 7-percent drop in energy consumption. The reason? Bemis Manufacturing retrofitted its warehouse with high-intensity fluorescent lighting from Orion Energy. The company reduced energy consumption and saved \$381,476 a year in energy and maintenance costs. Orion's high-intensity fluorescent lighting doubles light levels and slashes energy bills in half. They have retrofitted buildings across the state, from the Wisconsin Dells School gymnasium to Kraft Foods facilities, to a large new installation at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

Not only are the company's products saving consumers money and reducing energy consumption, they are also creating jobs. The company's first plant opened in Plymouth, and in 2005 Orion Energy Systems opened its Manitowoc plant. Between the two plants, Orion employs over 250 people in Wisconsin.

### Tower Tech Systems

Location: Manitowoc  
What: Manufactures Wind Towers and Components  
Employees: 250+

Paul Smith, vice president and chief operating officer of Tower Tech Systems, recently told *Corporate Report Wisconsin* that "we want to be the employer of choice in Manitowoc." The company has made this a reality by creating skilled manufacturing jobs that offer competitive wages and good benefits, including uniforms, laundry and repair services, as well as a new wellness program to promote health. The company employs over 250 people at its Manitowoc plant, which produces large-scale wind towers. Wind energy demand is on the rise, and Tower Tech's manufacturing has been on the rise as well. The company produced its first tower in 2005 and expects to produce 350 towers in 2009. While they are currently only producing wind towers they also have the facilities, ability, and know-how to produce large-scale bases and other pieces for offshore wind farms, an advantage in the shift to a clean energy economy.

### Virent Energies, Inc.

Location: Madison  
What: Advanced Biofuels  
Employees: 75+

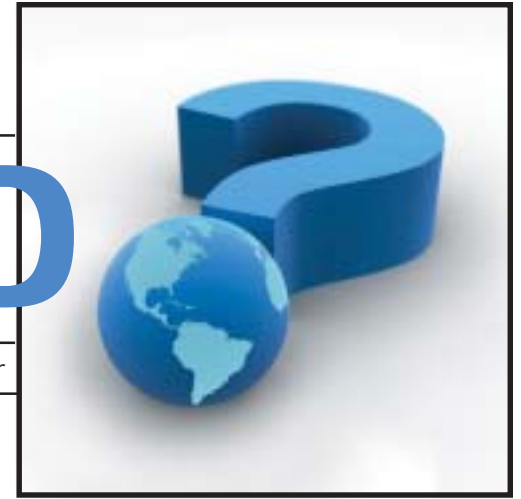
Imagine a clean alternative to gasoline that can be put directly into your vehicle's tank. Virent Energies is developing such a product with its revolutionary BioForming® process. First developed at UW-Madison, this process uses waste from soybeans and corn byproducts to produce a biofuel with the same chemical composition as petroleum-derived gasoline. Virent is taking this new product to the next level with its pilot plant in Madison and further plans to make their biofuel commercial in five to seven years. With vehicles being a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, Virent's BioForming® process offers tremendous potential as a clean fuel alternative that will reduce pollution. In two years, the company has attracted millions in public and private financing and had a 76-percent increase in employment. Virent currently employs 75 people in Madison.



Spotlight Companies by Location

# ASK DAVID

By David Vitse, Office Administrator



Thank you to members that submitted all the interesting questions following the first *Ask David* column. On to this month's questions and answers!

**Dear David: I am concerned about the growing number of non-rechargeable batteries in my home. There are many local places to recycle my rechargeable batteries, but I am having a hard time finding suitable places to recycle or dispose of my non-rechargeable batteries that utilize environmentally responsible methods. Please advise.**

—Mike M., Sturgeon Bay

Mike, excellent question! The dangers associated with batteries found in the state's landfills are important issues. Wisconsin's drive to responsibly dispose of electronic waste must aggressively address this problem through education on the risks of eroding batteries, encouraging less reliance on non-rechargeable batteries and the development of further sources that recycle non-rechargeable batteries already in circulation.

As a consumer, Mike, you can start by reducing your demand for battery-operated devices. Next, choose rechargeable batteries over throw-away alkaline batteries. And, finally, look for outlets that will recycle the alkaline batteries you do use. In brief, although we are often directed to dispose of dead non-rechargeable batteries in the trash, it should be our last resort. Recycling those batteries is much preferred over the landfill. Recycling non-rechargeable batteries keeps heavy metals, including silver, mercury, lead, zinc and nickel which are released during the batteries' stay in the landfill, out of Wisconsin's soil, water and air. Educating consumers of these significant health risks is an important first step in reducing the amount of batteries in landfills across the state.

Complementing education, it is essential that Wisconsinites reduce the number of non-rechargeable batteries that they purchase. Here are a couple tips that will help you reduce your purchases of non-rechargeable batteries:

1. Remember to see if you have new but unused batteries in your home before you purchase new non-rechargeable batteries.
2. Look at the labels before purchasing; Purchase batteries that include a minimal amount of heavy metals and mercury.

But enough lecture. Sources that accept non-rechargeable batteries are limited, but here are two ideas for you to responsibly dispose of your non-rechargeable batteries.

[www.batteryrecycling.com](http://www.batteryrecycling.com) is a Web site where you can purchase a kit to recycle your batteries. You purchase a kit, send away your batteries and they will recycle the metals, plastic and acid that is found in your batteries. The site has solutions for your home, your office, as well as for your

local government. You can also contact them at (800) 852-8127.

File 13 in Verona, Wisconsin, recycles electronic waste for a fee. Contact them at (608) 848-0013 or [www.file13usa.com](http://www.file13usa.com). Ask for Ed and he can help you further.

**Dear David: I have read that turning off power strips around my home when they are not in use (overnight, when I am on vacation, or simply running errands) is an important aspect of energy conservation. What are your thoughts?**

—Gof T. New Glarus

Gof, you don't believe your appliances when they tell you they are turned off? Well, you shouldn't; in essence, when your television, radio or lamp says it is turned off, it really means that they are on standby to turn on the very instant you hit the on button. This process has several names including phantom load and vampire appliances, to name a couple. Just like these haunting names, the process should scare you because it costs you a lot of lost energy, places lots of CO<sub>2</sub> into our environment and costs you money, potentially a lot of money.

Here are a few tips to reduce phantom energy loads in your home.

1. Use a power strip for your appliances. Have your television, DVD player, radio and sound system plugged in to a single surge protector/power strip. Turn this off when you go to bed at night,

leave for work, run errands for an extended period time and, most importantly, when you go on vacation. This way your electronics won't be wasting energy eagerly waiting for you to power them on.

2. Purchase Energy Star appliances. Look for the Energy Star label on any appliance you are thinking about buying. Ask the salesperson and he or she will point you in the right direction. Energy Star appliances can be found at any local appliance store and can be found for every type of appliance.
3. Go outside. Go walking. Go hiking. Go sailing. Go biking. Go swimming. Just remember to turn off your power strip when you do these activities. The more activities you do that require *your* energy rather than energy from the utility helps energy efficiency.

As an example, the staff scientist calculated, based on our local electrical supply in Wisconsin, using and turning off power strips at our office, every night, would save over 1,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> every year. That is why we have all made it a habit here at the office. Will you join us?

Please submit your Ask David questions via mail or e-mail. [dvitse@cleanwisconsin.org](mailto:dvitse@cleanwisconsin.org)

Clean Wisconsin  
C/O Ask David  
122 State St. Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703

## Enviro-SCRAMBLE Word Game

by Clean Wisconsin's staff

Unscramble each of the five scrambled words below, filling each space with one letter. Then unscramble the enclosed letters to answer the funny joke below.

MARED       
TIXES      
REEGYN       
UERUFT       
EERORST

What was the first course at the environmentalists' dinner?

Answer: " \_\_\_\_\_ "

Answers: Dream, exist, energy, future, restore ... Mixed greens



## Profile of Legislative Leadership Representative Chris Danou

By Amber Meyer Smith, Program Director

Representative Chris Danou is serving his first term as a State Representative for the 91<sup>st</sup> Assembly District, which encompasses portions of Buffalo, Trempealeau, Jackson, Pepin and Pierce counties. Representative Danou brings a strong commitment to natural resources to the Legislature, and his committee assignments reflect that.

Representative Danou earned his master's degree in Wildlife Biology and his love for the outdoors is obvious. He enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping with his family. He served as a police officer in the City of Onalaska prior to his 2008 election, but has also worked at the Wisconsin DNR, Madison Audubon Society, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy in Door County. He has participated in extensive wildlife conservation projects as well as oak savannah and prairie restoration.

"I have a deep appreciation for our beautiful state and the natural resources, which sometimes get taken for granted," Danou commented. "My committee assignments present a unique opportunity to make sure that energy and conservation issues are handled in a way that protects our resources for future generations."

Representative Danou sits on several committees of importance to Clean Wisconsin's legislative agenda. He serves as the Vice-Chair of the Assembly Natural Resources and is a member of the Assembly Renewable Energy & Rural Affairs, Assembly Fish & Wildlife and Assembly Agriculture committees. We look forward to working with him in the future and appreciate his shared commitments to clean water, clean air and clean energy.

## 1Sky Needs Your Help!

Clean Wisconsin has partnered with 1Sky, a national campaign, to enact bold federal climate change legislation in 2009. It is important to work to make Wisconsin a leader in the Midwest on global warming, but we also need to ensure that the United States takes a lead on global warming. While no specific legislation has been introduced yet, it is critical that our federal leaders hear from their constituents on this issue.

The most important votes in Wisconsin will come from U.S. Senator Herb Kohl (D) and U.S. Representatives Tom Petri (R-Fond du Lac), David Obey (D-Wausau), Steve Kagen (D-Appleton) and Ron Kind (D-La Crosse). We are looking for people in these districts to get involved, doing things like writing letters to the editor and helping us attend and organize events in these districts.



If you are interested in getting involved on either the state or federal level, contact 1Sky organizer Katy Walter at [kwalter@cleanwisconsin.org](mailto:kwalter@cleanwisconsin.org) or (608) 251-7020 ext. 47.

[www.1sky.org](http://www.1sky.org)

## Business Sponsor Program

Clean Wisconsin offers several ways to support our mission of protecting Wisconsin's clean air, clean water and special places. One way is through our strong Business Sponsorship program.

If you own a business and personally share our mission, or if the mission of your business supports our mission, please join Clean Wisconsin's Business Sponsorship program. Think of it as an investment in your business. We all have a responsibility to protect Wisconsin, not for a single interest, but for our families, wildlife and the future.

### Recognition and Advertising Benefits to Clean Wisconsin's Business Sponsorship

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| \$150 - \$499     | One listing in our newsletter to our 10,000 members  |
| \$500 - \$999     | One listing in our newsletter to our 10,000 members; listing in our Annual Report  |
| \$1,000 - \$4,999 | One listing in our newsletter to our 10,000 members; listing in our Annual Report; listing on our Web site                         |
| \$5,000+          | Listing in our newsletter to our 10,000 members for one year, including log; listing in our Annual Report; listing on our Web site |

All donations to Clean Wisconsin are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

For more information, please contact Brian Kelly at 608-251-7020 ext. 23



## *Sam and His Dad* *Father-son team* *work for a cleaner* *Wisconsin*

*By Allie Theuerkauf, Development Assistant*

Warren and Sam Peterson are not your average father-son team. The pair has engaged in outdoor excursions from the time Sam was old enough to walk. These excursions turned into overnight expeditions as Sam got older.

“When I started taking Sam along on our outdoor trips, I wanted to make sure that he saw things that may not be around when he gets older,” said Warren. Over the years the duo has traveled in order to witness such spectacles as sandhill cranes and tundra swans.

Recently, they have begun to use their expeditions as a way to educate themselves and others on how pollution affects the outdoors that they love.

“It just didn’t make sense to us that 50 percent of the wells tested in northeast Wisconsin should test positive for pollution or that we need to watch how much fish we eat in this beautiful state of ours so we do not overload ourselves with mercury,” Warren said.

This summer, their expedition will take the duo down seven major Wisconsin rivers that flow into the Mississippi. Along the way, they will photograph and videotape the beauty of Wisconsin rivers as well as complete a series of water quality tests to “show the underlying ugly that is happening as well.” Their goal is to keep the environment as healthy as possible by setting an example for everyone to follow.

Part of this has included the creation of a Web site to help get the word out. As Warren and Sam prepare for their river expedition this summer, they find themselves in need of supplies. Any financial support of their mission is greatly appreciated, and they have a wish list of supplies on their site.

You can donate to their cause, learn about their upcoming river tour, and check out their past expeditions by visiting

[samandhisdadsexpeditions.com](http://samandhisdadsexpeditions.com)



[www.cleanwisconsin.org](http://www.cleanwisconsin.org)