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Tuesday July 10, 2007

NEWS

O-A joins program to conserve electric use District could get annual payback

By [George Basler](#)
Press & Sun-Bulletin

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OWEGO -- The Owego-Apalachin Central School District has become part of Operation Save New York, an award-winning program designed to conserve energy when heat waves are straining the state's electrical system.

The program, administered by the Buffalo-based Energy Curtailment Specialists Inc., has enrolled 2,000 New York facilities, including more than 300 educational institutions, who agree to cut energy use when the state's power grid faces increased demands for electricity. The goal is to avoid brown-outs and other power disruptions.

In return, the district expects to receive an estimated \$5,000 a year from the Buffalo firm, said Eric Kochis, the district's energy conservation specialist.

O-A will also receive a 40 cents per kilowatt hour payback for dropping energy use below average demand when the state's power supplies get tight, Kochis said. This could put another \$5,000 a year in the school district's coffers, he said. Energy Curtailment Specialists will install meters, at no cost, in the district's buildings to monitor consumption.

The company approached the district about enrolling in the program, officials said. The company gets paid by utilities, such as New York State Electric & Gas, to balance power across the electrical grid so the state can avoid power failures.

The plan works like this: Owego-Apalachin will receive 24-hour notice when the electric grid is forecast to be unstable and will then take steps to reduce its energy use during the time when demand is predicted to be at a high point, Kochis said. These steps could include things such as shutting down air conditioning for an hour or two; turning off the pump in the pool for a couple of hours; or testing its generators.

While more than 300 schools are enrolled in the program, most are located in the New York City/Long Island area, said Julie Bevilacqua, director of communications with the company. Afton, in Chenango County, is the only other Southern Tier district enrolled.

The program has the potential of lowering overall electricity demand in the state by 3 percent, said Bob Farrell, O-A's chief information officer.

"We want to do our part," he said, adding the meters being installed by the Buffalo firm will allow officials to see 15-minute snapshots of energy consumption throughout the district.

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Congratulations O-A. This is an outstanding example of effective energy management and out of the box thinking. Hopefully the other B-T BOCES school districts will follow your leadship and also sign on. Nice work!!!



Posted by: **GClarke** on Tue Jul 10, 2007 8:34 am

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