

Communities Can “Do the Math” to Reduce School Energy Costs

Connecticut communities can save money by participating in a program that measures the energy efficiency of public school buildings. The [Institute for Sustainable Energy](#) (ISE) developed the program, which uses energy tracking to identify inefficient public facilities. The program helps communities with limited capital and maintenance resources target their funding to projects with the greatest potential to reduce energy costs.

In 2004 and 2005, ISE worked with nine communities to benchmark more than 100 public schools using the EPA’s Portfolio Manager benchmarking program. The analysis revealed that the schools used more than \$20 million in energy annually and were very inefficient. In fact, they fell into the lowest benchmarking quartile when compared to schools nationally. Through cost-effective efficiency and conservation practices, communities could typically reduce energy consumption by 30 percent by just bringing the school up to the national average. If the schools were renovated to meet ENERGY STAR® standards, the saving would be nearly \$8 million annually or a reduction of 40 percent.

The process encourages communities to participate in utility-sponsored conservation programs and to aggregate or bundle projects to attract third party financing from energy services companies. Stamford, Hartford, Derby and Windham have initiated performance contracting projects following this model. Connecticut has more than 1,026 locally controlled public schools, all in communities that could benefit from the energy savings that this program identifies.



Connecticut Climate Change