

February 4, 2009

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**Chicago's Green Office Challenge to Drive Energy, Cost Savings
*Unprecedented Business Engagement Initiative Will Help Meet
Chicago Climate Action Plan Goals***

Chicago, Illinois – The Chicago Department of Environment, in collaboration with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, has launched the Chicago Green Office Challenge to help contribute towards the ambitious goals of the Chicago Climate Action Plan. The Challenge is a friendly competition for office tenants and property owners in the central business district to reduce energy and water use, curb greenhouse gas emissions, and save businesses money. Among other goals, the Challenge aims to achieve a reduction in waste in participating buildings through behavioral changes and capital improvements.

“Whether we are at work or at home, we spend most of our lives in buildings. The Green Office Challenge engages property managers and tenants alike to make a profound difference from their places of employment,” said Suzanne Malec-McKenna, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Environment. “We will need everyone – businesses, residents, and government – to do their part in order to reach the goals set forth in the Chicago Climate Action Plan.”

The Chicago Climate Action Plan is one of the nation's most ambitious plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. A key element is to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent in 40% of its residential units and 50% of commercial and industrial facilities. Buildings account for about 70 percent of Chicago's greenhouse gas emissions – nearly 40 percent from commercial buildings – making the building sector a prime target for reduction strategies.

“The Green Office Challenge represents an unprecedented strategy for increasing efficiency in the building sector, reducing greenhouse gas reductions at the local level and engaging the entire community in that effort,” said Michelle Wyman, Executive Director of ICLEI USA. ICLEI is working directly with the City to develop the Challenge and will help local governments across the country replicate this model in their communities.

The Challenge is an opportunity for businesses to gain a competitive advantage in green building innovations and to cut costs. More than 100 property owners and office tenants are participating, including: Jones Lang LaSalle, the Merchandise Mart, Sears Tower, Transwestern Corporation, AECOM, Bain & Co., KPMG, Microsoft, and Office Depot. The full list of participants is available on the website.

"Participating in the green office challenge is just one way Chicago's commercial real estate community is proactively implementing environmentally sustainable practices into day-to-day operations," said Michael Cornicelli, executive vice president, BOMA/Chicago. "We're proud of our member buildings that are participating in this endeavor and believe that with the right education, information and leadership in place, we can collectively make Chicago's office buildings among the greenest in the country."

Office tenants will be evaluated through a "Green Office Scorecard" based on 50 green strategies that related to five key office-related sectors: waste, energy, transportation, outreach and property manager engagement. Property managers will utilize Energy Star's Portfolio Manager and other tools to demonstrate their achievement in four key sectors: Reduction of energy use, water use, and waste, as well as Tenant Engagement.

For more information, please visit www.chicagogreenofficechallenge.org.

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