

Arlington Makes Public Detailed Energy Report Cards

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- *Complex challenges revealed; \$100,000 in energy savings*

ARLINGTON, Va. --- Arlington County today made available on its website detailed energy data for all 67 of its government buildings. The report cards are part of Arlington's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through its Fresh AIRE – Arlington Initiative to Reduce Emissions – program.

The data compares energy consumption in buildings in 2007 with energy consumption in the same buildings in 2008. It shows that Arlington's efficiency efforts saved more than 900,000 kWh of electricity and more than 15,000 therms of natural gas. That translates into energy savings of approximately \$100,000, even though the winter months were colder in 2008 than in 2007.

The energy intensity (how much energy a building uses per square foot), of the County's continuing buildings fell 2% between 2007 and 2008. The County added several new or renovated buildings in 2008, including the new Fire Station 5 and the renovated Fairlington Community Center, but energy use in all County buildings still declined by slightly less than 1%.

"Improving energy efficiencies of large public facilities is an enormous challenge," said Department of Environmental Services Director Robert Griffin. "Having robust data is a vital first step. We hope that by publishing these detailed reports, we will inspire others to follow our lead."

Building Energy Report Cards

Buildings contribute the largest portion (39%) of Arlington County government's total greenhouse gas emissions. This is why the Fresh AIRE team focused first on building energy data.

The new Energy Report Cards show two years of energy data for all Arlington County buildings, including energy consumption, energy intensity, and carbon footprint. Also included are actions taken and next steps for each facility. Some highlights:

The Central Library is one of Arlington's greatest energy success stories. Electricity consumption has been cut 30% since 1999 through a succession of lighting retrofits, building control tune-ups, and specific attention to energy-efficient operation. The Central Library now uses 900,000 kWh per year less than it did ten years ago, providing cost savings of \$75,000 per year. Overall energy consumption is 12% lower than comparable buildings (EPA comparisons).

In 2008, new boilers were installed in the 49-year-old Fire Station No. 10. Already, this move has cut energy usage by 10% and we anticipate a 20% reduction for a full year. Overall energy consumption is 18% lower than comparable buildings (EPA comparisons)

Fort C.F. Smith enjoyed more public events and increased usage in 2008, explaining part of the increase in energy use. In 2008, the energy data helped us discover a problem with the heating system in this 119-year-old historic house. We have since fixed the heating system and expect consumption to fall in 2009. We will also perform an energy audit of this complex in 2009.

Built in 2006 as a LEED-certified building, the Walter Reed Community Center uses more energy than anticipated or desired. In 2008 AIRE funded a forensic engineering study of this building's performance, and we will implement improvements in 2009 to cut energy use substantially. Modern buildings are complex systems of components. The components of this building have not been working well together, but we now have a plan to make the building function more effectively and efficiently.

The building energy report cards are part of a community effort to be as transparent as possible about energy usage and costs at county facilities. The voluntary federal ENERGY STAR program encourages building owners to make this information publicly available. Arlington has taken this first step and encourages others to do so. Arlington will continue to share information on Arlington's activities to reduce its carbon footprint.

About Fresh AIRE

As part of its Fresh AIRE program, in 2007 Arlington pledged to reduce carbon emissions from 2000 to 2012 by 10 percent. It frequently achieves 20% return on investment for energy efficiencies.

Fresh AIRE – Arlington Initiative to Reduce Emissions – was launched by Arlington County in January 2007 as Arlington County Government's program for combating climate change. AIRE is a collaboration effort between Arlington County government, businesses, and residents designed to reduce harmful greenhouse gases through energy efficiency measures, green building technologies and practices, transportation alternatives, improved recycling, and water conservation. Learn more at www.arlingtonva.us/aire.

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