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COLWICH ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TO CELEBRATE REDUCED ENERGY USE

Westar Energy to celebrate students' energy saving efforts at ice cream social on Mar. 12.

WICHITA, Kan., March 11, 2009 — Westar Energy will revisit Colwich Elementary School on March 12 to celebrate a school-wide energy saving effort by the students. During the celebration, representatives from Westar's energy efficiency division will reward 98 "energy champions" who learned to create energy saving habits by tracking their progress for one week with an energy saver diary. During the week students logged over 4,800 ways to save energy. That equates to an average of 50 habits per week and seven habits a day per student. The most common habits were turning off lights in a room, not running the faucet when brushing teeth, turning off the TV, computer, video games, etc. when not in use, and keeping the thermostat set at 68 degrees for the winter.

"We are very pleased with the results of the energy saver diaries. Students were able to see what small, simple habit changes they can make to save energy and potentially lower their family's monthly energy bill," said Sherii Farmer, account manager in Westar's energy efficiency department.

The ice cream social will take place at 2:30 p.m. in the school cafeteria, 401 S. Marion. During the celebration, one student from each class will receive a home energy saver kit and the top energy saver for the week will be recognized.

“Our goal in involving the students in this activity was to encourage them to understand how their efforts are helping the environment and contributing to Colwich’s potential reduction in energy use,” Farmer said.

The program is part of the Colwich Switch, a year-long energy savings study being conducted by Westar with the residents of Colwich. The study looks at the effects of households installing compact fluorescent light bulbs as well as adopting energy saving measures suggested by Westar’s Energy Efficiency department. Westar will announce results of the year-long study at a community event in September.

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 679,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 6,500 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates approximately 33,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

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