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Maine, MA, NH MEPs Team to Launch Pilot Project to Integrate Energy and Environmental Measures

MEPs Will Work to Implement EPA Guidelines on Energy Savings for Its Clients

(Augusta, ME) – The Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, in collaboration with MEPs in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, announce the creation of a pilot program to integrate government conservation guidelines into its training programs. The MEPs will evaluate the terms and measures of the Environmental Protection Agency’s *Lean and Energy Toolkit* working directly with regional manufacturers.

“These Lean and Energy/Environmental tactical training tools will assist manufacturing as part of long term national or regional strategies to increase manufacturing competitiveness through Lean production, energy efficiency and environmental stewardship,” said Rosemary Presnar, Operations Manager for Maine MEP.

In 2007, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published its *Lean and Energy Toolkit* to assist organizations in reducing energy use and improving performance through Lean manufacturing. The MEPs will integrate the EPA’s suggestions while working with six manufacturing clients in the three New England states.

“For years, the MEPs have been showing manufacturers how to streamline and improve operational efficiency with Lean training,” said Jack Healy, Director of Operations of the Massachusetts MEP. “It makes sense to include energy efficiencies as part of Lean training. Those techniques will help save money and help save the planet.”

“At the regional level, New England consumes more energy than the rest of the country,” said Zenagui Brahim, Director of Operations for New Hampshire MEP. “No segment of the U.S. economy has as much to gain from energy-use reduction as manufacturing. The manufacturing sector consumes 70 percent of industrial energy usage.”

Within the manufacturing sector, the largest consumers of energy are the food, paper, petroleum and coal products, chemicals, and primary metals subsectors, accounting for 83 percent of energy consumption in the manufacturing sector. The primary energy sources for manufacturers are Natural Gas and Electricity. Process heating accounts for 62.8 percent of direct energy end use at manufacturing facilities, while machine drives and motors account for another 27.3 percent.

A September 2005 poll taken by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) revealed that 93 percent of directors from small and medium-sized manufacturing companies believe that higher energy prices are having a negative impact on their bottom line. A higher level of response would not be surprising if the survey was taken in 2008.

After all of the companies in the pilot program have added an energy focus to their lean programs by working with the MEPs and the *Lean and Energy Toolkit*, the Maine MEP will deliver a final report to assess its effectiveness and make recommendations to the EPA. The emphasis will be on replicating best practices with other Lean manufacturers.

Maine MEP initially coordinated with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to present the program proposal to EPA and will continue to work with DEP throughout the pilots.

About Maine MEP

Maine MEP is an affiliate of the NIST under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Maine MEP program call 1-800-637-4634 or visit www.mainemep.org.

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