

Louisville Mayor Abramson Honored as ENERGY STAR 'Partner of the Year'

By Kevin McCarty

More than 800 government officials, energy professionals, business leaders and others convened in Washington, DC to recognize ENERGY STAR award winners for their contributions to energy efficiency and climate protection, honoring Louisville Mayor Jerry E. Abramson as a 2010 Partner of the Year for his leadership in reducing energy use in buildings in the city.

In his partner keynote address at the March 18 event sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Abramson said, "We couldn't do this without our partners."

Praising staff of the EPA ENERGY STAR Program, he said, "Because of their guidance and the collaboration of this team, we have been able to pull everybody together to create this green momentum."

"Bottom line is green is green," he said, noting that these efforts result in "real savings and you are doing the right thing."

'Kilowatt Crackdown' Basis for Award

EPA recognized Abramson and his city for its 'Kilowatt Crackdown' program, a campaign which challenged building owners to utilize ENERGY STAR tools to track and reduce energy use in buildings, both large and small, across all sectors of the community. The challenge enrolled more than 240 competitors representing more than 325 buildings (about 46 million ft²), from schools to corporations, like Humana and UPS. Results of the competition are expected later this month.

The Louisville Energy Alliance, a partnership of Louisville Metro Government and major commercial real estate associations, oversees the Kilowatt Crackdown program. EPA also cited establishment of this nonprofit and its subsequent work uniting the private sector in support of the city's green efforts. (For more information on this partnership, go to www.louisvilleenergyalliance.com.)

In discussing his efforts to green Louisville, noting that his city lies amid coal mines, Abramson said, "Louisville, Kentucky is not Portland. It is not Seattle. It is not Chicago," Abramson said, adding that "if you can do it in my city, you know that you can do it too." Describing his broader efforts to green his city and its economy, he said, "This is not a sprint, it is a marathon. This is not an initiative, it is a movement."

The former Conference of Mayors President praised the agency and its staff throughout this remarks for their support of the city's efforts to launch its green initiatives. "EPA's ENERGY STAR gave us the guidance to do this."

During her remarks at the dinner event, EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson praised Mayor Abramson for his leadership, stating, “his city embodies the energy efficiency work of cities throughout the U.S.”

ENERGY STAR Supports City Efforts

Recent Conference surveys affirm Louisville’s experience with ENERGY STAR tools and resources in support of local energy and climate efforts. A January 2010 report on the implementation of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program showed that more than seventy percent out of 221 cities surveyed indicating expect to incorporate ENERGY STAR tools and resources into their EECBG programs.

ENERGY STAR was introduced by U.S. EPA in 1992 as a voluntary market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through increased energy efficiency. Today, the program offers governments, businesses and consumers energy-efficient solutions to save energy, money and help protect the environment for future generations. More than 17,000 organizations are ENERGY STAR partners committed to improving the energy efficiency of products, homes, buildings and businesses. For more information about ENERGY STAR, visit www.energystar.gov