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Merrimack Valley School District reduces its carbon footprint with help from NH Sustainable Energy Program

Emissions reduced over 43,000 pounds per year

Penacook, NH – December 21, 2009 – The administrative offices of SAU 46 will be comfortable this winter thanks to a new connection to the Merrimack Valley’s High Performance High School’s heating system. Since 2006, the high school and middle school have been heated by a highly efficient biomass boiler that burns wood chips. This new heating system expansion added about 210 feet of insulated pipe to tie the administrative building into the high school’s system. The \$90,000 project was funded largely by an \$83,685 grant from the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund (GHGERF) administered by the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission.

The 3,940 sq. ft. building previously used 3,222 therms of natural gas for heating per year. The biomass plant replaces the natural gas with about 37 tons of wood chips for heating. In addition the administration building received a lighting upgrade, replaced aging compressors, air handlers and controls. “These modifications are expected to save close to \$3,000 in electrical cost per year and reduce consumption by about 35 %,” said Neil Barry, Merrimack Valley’s Plant Manager. “The tie in to the heating system and the electrical upgrades will provide a total reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of 43,805 pounds per year.”

“We see this as a great project,” said Jack Ruderman, Director of the PUC’s Sustainable Energy Division. “Not only have we met the goals of the fund by reducing greenhouse gas emissions

that contribute to climate change, but we have helped a New Hampshire school lower its fuel expenses."

The GHGERF fund consists of proceeds from the auction of carbon allowances through New Hampshire's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), an effort by 10 Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from the electric power sector.

For more information on the Merrimack Valley High School's high performance heating system call Neil Barry at 603-753-6422.

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