

**Contact:** Jamie Graves  
Jasculca/Terman and Associates for  
Earth Hour 2009  
312/573-5475 (office)  
309/648-5689 (mobile)



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Earth Hour Chicago • Media Release

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## **CHICAGO RETURNS AS A FLAGSHIP U.S. CITY FOR WORLD WILDLIFE FUND'S EARTH HOUR CAMPAIGN**

*March 28<sup>th</sup> Event to Highlight Chicago's Commitment to Fighting Climate Change*

**CHICAGO, Ill.—Feb. 4, 2009**—Mayor Richard M. Daley, officials from ComEd and Chicago business leaders officially launched Chicago's return as a flagship U.S. city for *Earth Hour 2009*, a global event in which cities will voluntarily and safely turn out their lights to demonstrate concern about climate change.

At a press conference at the Merchandise Mart, Mayor Daley and other civic and business leaders laid out a number of far-reaching environmental initiatives, including the city's active engagement in Earth Hour, which will take place Saturday, March 28 from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (local time) in more than 300 cities around the world.

In Chicago, Earth Hour 2009 is being sponsored by ComEd and is a partnership of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), ComEd, the City of Chicago and Leo Burnett.

During Earth Hour, buildings, businesses and individuals will turn off their lights in a dramatic, highly symbolic gesture to demonstrate that by working together, people all around the world can make a difference in the fight against climate change. In addition to Chicago, participating cities include Las Vegas, San Francisco, Copenhagen, Rome, Dubai, Hong Kong, Istanbul, London, Mexico City, Moscow, Sydney and Tel Aviv.

"With its success in 2008, Chicagoans proved their ability to come together and send a message about their concern about the risks our planet is facing because of the impacts of climate change," said WWF President and CEO Carter Roberts. "As a returning flagship city, Chicago again will play a critical role in the global success of Earth Hour 2009 by not only building public awareness about climate change, but in calling upon their elected leaders to take action."

Chicago made its debut as a flagship city for Earth Hour in 2008, as more than 2.7 million people in the region turned off their lights in support of the future well-being of the planet. During Earth Hour 2008, ComEd reported electricity savings of 818 megawatt hours – the carbon emissions equivalent of taking 1 million cars off the road for one hour or planting 158 acres of trees.

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“ComEd is honored to sponsor Earth Hour Chicago – an important event that will raise awareness about climate change and demonstrate how each of us can make a difference,” said Anne Pramaggiore, executive vice president of Customer Operations, Regulatory, and External Affairs, ComEd. “We are taking steps to reduce our own carbon footprint, and Earth Hour is one example of ComEd’s commitment to energy efficiency and the environment.”

While the core initiative of this year’s campaign remains the same – to turn off the lights for one hour – 2009 will also emphasize long-term sustainable goals. The Chicago campaign is asking businesses, schools and residents to think about how they can incorporate Earth Hour into their daily lives, from turning out lights when leaving a room, to unplugging unnecessary electronic equipment, to turning off decorative lighting on buildings late at night on a regular basis.

During Earth Hour 2009, Chicago will once again turn off or dim the lights at many of Chicago’s buildings and famous landmarks, including Navy Pier’s Ferris Wheel, the Sears Tower, marquees at the Cadillac Palace Theatre and Ford Center for the Performing Arts, and businesses along the Magnificent Mile. Suburban mayors, schools and universities across the city, building and condo associations, and many others including hotels and the Chicago Park District are planning to participate.

Here’s how individuals, businesses and organizations can participate in Earth Hour 2009:

- Register at **EarthHourUS.org**
- Turn off your lights from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local time on Saturday, March 28, 2009
- During that hour, replace your old light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs
- Commit to reducing your energy consumption in the year ahead
- Visit **EarthHourUS.org** to find out how to continue making a difference in the fight against climate change after Earth Hour, such as writing to your elected officials

Earth Hour is a completely voluntary program. Planners for the event have been working closely with city public safety officials and building engineers to ensure that while Chicago makes a dramatic statement with its lights out, it will do so safely. Just as in 2008, street lights, lobby lights in public spaces, hospital lights and any lights deemed to impact public safety or vital services will remain lit. It is also strongly recommended to use flashlights instead of candles during Earth Hour.

Earth Hour is only one step in Chicago’s path towards becoming the greenest city in the nation. The City recently unveiled the Chicago Climate Action Plan ([ChicagoClimateAction.org](http://ChicagoClimateAction.org)), a comprehensive and detailed roadmap outlining 35 strategies to lower greenhouse gas emissions and address the climate change impacts already underway. Residents can play an active role in tackling this important issue by visiting the website and taking the \$800 Savings Challenge—a list of easy, low or no-cost energy-efficient actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save households up to \$823 each year. On the website, residents can also learn about other City programs, resources, and initiatives from recycling to green buildings to biking that are featured in the plan.

**To register for Earth Hour or for more ideas about how to celebrate Earth Hour, visit [www.EarthHourUS.org](http://www.EarthHourUS.org).**

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