



**For Immediate Release:**

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## **ICLEI USA Joins City of Chicago In Announcing Round 2 of Highly Successful Green Office Challenge**

*First Year Led to Savings of More than 70 million kilowatt-hours of electricity and 54,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide – equal to removing more than 10,000 cars off City Streets.*

**Chicago, Illinois [January 27, 2010]** – The Chicago Department of Environment, in collaboration with ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA, is pleased to announce Round 2 of the highly-successful Chicago Green Office Challenge, an initiative to reduce energy consumption by businesses and greenhouse gas emissions from commercial buildings in the central business district.

“We couldn’t be more pleased to be joining the City of Chicago and Mayor Daley for the second round of one of the most innovative and successful programs to reduce energy and curb greenhouse gas emissions among businesses and commercial buildings,” said Mayor Patrick Hays, City of North Little Rock, AR, Corporate President and Chair of ICLEI USA Board of Directors. “The success of the Chicago Green Office Challenge has served as a catalyst for other cities to develop similar programs that engage the business community in a friendly competition to reduce energy and help the environment at the same time - that’s a winning approach.”

In the inaugural round of the Green Office Challenge, more than 100 tenants and 39 property managers successfully reduced their companies’ waste, decreased their water and energy use, and engaged their colleagues in the Challenge. Collectively, participants reduced more than 72 million kilowatt-hours of electricity – equivalent to the electricity used by 6,500 homes in one year. This resulted in the mitigation of more than 54,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere – equal to removing more than 10,000 cars off Chicago streets. In addition to an energy reduction, participants also diverted 1,200 tons of waste from the landfill, and reduced water usage by 5 percent.

“The City of Chicago and Mayor Daley are setting a new gold standard for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and curbing energy use from commercial buildings and businesses, which account for a considerable portion of the city’s overall harmful emissions,” said Martin

Chávez, Executive Director, ICLEI USA and former three-term mayor of Albuquerque, NM. “We applaud their achievements and encourage more Chicago businesses to join the Challenge and gain a competitive advantage in green building innovations, while vastly cutting costs.”

In Round 2, office tenants will continue to be evaluated through a Green Office Scorecard, 50 green strategies in five categories: outreach, energy, waste, transportation, and property manager engagement. A new web-based tool was created for tenants and property managers to input and track data for Round 2. Property managers will continue to utilize ENERGY STAR’s Portfolio Manager and the online data management tool to demonstrate achievement in four key sectors: reduction of energy use, water use, and waste, as well as tenant engagement.

ICLEI USA Executive Director Martin Chávez joined Mayor Richard M. Daley in recognizing Green Business Challenge participants for their outstanding achievements in an awards ceremony late last year. Four property managers received the highest achievement, Leadership in Property Manager Excellence, for the reductions they made in energy and water use, waste reduction, and tenant engagement. Seventeen tenants, who varied in company size and industry, were awarded Leadership in Tenant Excellence, the highest tenant achievement.

The goals of the Green Business Challenge are closely aligned with the Chicago Climate Action Plan, one of the nation’s most ambitious plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. A key element is to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent in 40 percent of its residential units and 50 percent of commercial and industrial facilities. Buildings account for about 70 percent of Chicago’s greenhouse gas emissions – nearly 40 percent from commercial buildings – making the building sector a prime target for reduction strategies.

A new round brings new sponsors and partners to the program. Office Depot was the underwriting sponsor for Round 1 of the program and will continue to be in Round 2. Siemens Energy will bring their knowledge and expertise in the energy efficiency field, and 3 Degrees will educate participants in the field of Carbon Offsets and Renewable Energy Credits. Chicago’s Delta Institute will also join as a program partner.

### **About the City of Chicago and the Green Business Challenge**

*Since the initial launch of the Chicago Green Office Challenge in 2009, ICLEI has expanded the program beyond Chicago to help four additional communities build on the impressive initiatives they already have in place to grow a green economy and promote sustainability. Arlington County, VA, Charleston, SC, Houston, TX and The Port of San Diego, CA have each launched their own programs modeled after the Chicago Green Office Challenge. For more information, please visit: [www.chicagogreenofficechallenge.org](http://www.chicagogreenofficechallenge.org)*

### **About ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA**

*ICLEI USA’s membership represents some of the most aggressive and innovative climate action happening in the United States including: innovative building codes in New York, carbon neutrality goals in Austin, light rail in Portland, renewable energy in San Jose to energy efficiency in North Little Rock – ICLEI USA’s members are moving forward on lowering Greenhouse Gas Emissions and bolstering their sustainability efforts right now. For more information, please visit: [www.icleiusa.org](http://www.icleiusa.org)*