

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chicago Area Companies, Organizations Honored for Achievements In Sustainability

CHICAGO — The city’s famous Shedd Aquarium joined the ranks of winners of the Illinois Governor’s Sustainability Award on Tuesday by cutting its utilization of water by half between 2007 and 2014 and implementing other sustainability measures. Significant improvement to water infrastructure led to \$191,133 annual savings for the aquarium which slashed its use of ‘new water’ by more than 28 million gallons.

Nineteen Illinois companies and organizations were honored Oct. 27 at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel and Towers for their demonstrated leadership in implementing sustainable principles and practices. The Governor’s Sustainability Awards, the “Emmy Awards for Sustainability,” were presented by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC). ISTC is a unit of the Prairie Research Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

“Businesses that invest in sustainability drive a thriving Illinois economy by creating jobs and making an investment in our future,” said Governor Bruce Rauner. “The Governor’s Sustainability Awards foster sustainable innovation and encourage our public and private sector to build a stronger, more sustainable Illinois.”

Among other Chicagoland sustainability champions recognized as 2015 Illinois Governor’s Sustainability Award Winners were:

Abbott Laboratories — Based in Chicago, this major diversified global health care company achieved broad reductions in waste generation as well as energy and fuel use. HVAC system improvements and upgrades to boilers and cooling tower water pumps contributed to electricity usage reductions of seven million kWh annually. Fuel switching from coal to natural gas helped the company reduce its carbon footprint by 25,000 metric tons of CO₂e. Recycling at the company increased 43 percent since 2013, while landfilled waste was cut 32 percent.

AbbVie Inc. — This research-based biopharmaceutical company recognizes three key environmental priorities: Climate Change, Water Usage, and Waste Management and Product Stewardship. Recent efforts at their Lake County facility established new systems to reduce waste generated in manufacturing and recover solvent product; updated equipment to reach higher standards of energy efficiency; solved a quality assurance issue while reducing water consumption; and actively involved employees for an “All for One AbbVie” cause. Overall, the projects resulted in an annual reduction of 1,673,300 pounds of hazardous waste; 12,978,860 pounds of non-hazardous waste; 1,022,121 kWh of electricity; 724 metric tons of CO₂e, 11,000,000 gallons of water; and saved more than \$702,631.

Argonne National Laboratory — As a research center tasked with addressing national challenges in clean energy, environment, technology and national security, Argonne’s environmental footprint is a central concern. In FY 2014, Argonne met or exceeded a number of its sustainability goals for the decade, including potable water intensity 36 percent below baseline, and energy intensity 30 percent below baseline goals. During that year Argonne established next generation real-time monitoring of its campus systems, captured and recycled significant greenhouse gas emissions, planned for climate change impacts, and diverted 77 percent of on-site construction waste for recycling or reuse.

ComEd — While providing electric service to about 70 percent of Illinoisans, ComEd utilizes a ISO 14001 certified Environmental Management System (EMS) to track hundreds of environmental actions and improvements. Recent achievements include facility and process upgrades; reductions in hazardous waste; increases in recycling; protection of birds and endangered species; protection of natural areas; community partnerships; and greenhouse gas reductions.

Cook County — County President Preckwinkle adopted an ambitious goal to reduce the county’s greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050 and, in order to do so, appointed a Green Leadership Team comprised of key leaders from across the county to implement sustainable practices. The county has been able to decrease GHG emissions from buildings by nine percent since 2010 through both small and large-scale capital projects. An in-depth analysis of the fleet practices resulted in a complete restructuring of the fleet management at the county and has resulted in 57,849 gallons of fuel savings between 2012 and 2013. The Cook County Sheriff’s Recycling Program collected more than 2.3 million pounds of recyclables during 2014.

Since 1987, ISTC has presented Governor’s Awards to organizations in Illinois that have demonstrated a commitment to environmental excellence through outstanding and innovative sustainability practices. Any Illinois public or private organization is eligible to apply for the award. Winners are selected through a rigorous process of review and examination by ISTC technical assistance experts.

Sustainable economic growth is essential to the long-term competitiveness of the state, according to ISTC Director Kevin O’Brien. “These awards demonstrate that you *can* preserve natural and cultural resources and simultaneously grow your business,” he said. “That is why this award is very critical. It demonstrates it can be done, it’s being done in Illinois, and it is what sets us apart as Illinoisans.”

The complete list of 2015 award winners is listed below.

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2015 Governor's Sustainability Award Winners

Abbott Laboratories — Abbott Park

AbbVie Inc. — North Chicago

Argonne National Laboratory — Lemont

Caterpillar — Morton Parts Distribution Center

Clarke — St. Charles

ComEd — Oak Brook Terrace

* Cook County — Chicago

* Golden State Foods Chicago — McCook

* Griffith Laboratories — Alsip

* Hoffer Plastics Corporation — South Elgin

* Illinois Tollway — Downers Grove

J.L. Clark — Rockford

* John G. Shedd Aquarium — Chicago

* McHenry County Government — Woodstock

* Public Building Commission — Chicago

* Saratoga Food Specialties — Bolingbrook

* Silgan Containers Manufacturing Corporation — Rochelle

* University Housing at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

* Western Illinois University — Macomb

** Indicates a first-time winner of the Illinois Governor's Sustainability Award.*

Additional information on the Governor's Sustainability Awards program, lists of previous winners, and information on technical assistance for Illinois companies and communities is available from the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, One Hazelwood Drive, Champaign, IL 61820, phone (217) 333-8940, <http://www.istc.illinois.edu/>

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The **Prairie Research Institute** at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is the applied research arm of the state of Illinois, and provides anticipatory research, long-term data collection, and a capacity for rapid deployment and response to sudden or unexpected circumstances. The institute is the home of the Illinois State Scientific Surveys. The Institute provides objective, cutting-edge research and solutions to allow citizens and decision-makers to make choices that ensure sustainable economic development, enduring environmental quality, and cultural resource preservation for Illinois and beyond.

www.prairie.illinois.edu

The **Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC)** was established in 1985 and joined the Prairie Research Institute with the other surveys in 2008. It works to provide innovative solutions to drive economic development by balancing the needs of People, Planet and Profit.

www.istc.illinois.edu