



North Carolina Department of Administration

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STATE ENERGY OFFICE RECEIVES REGIONAL INNOVATIONS AWARD

RALEIGH – The State Energy Office of the N.C. Department of Administration has won the Council of State Governments' Regional Innovations Award in recognition of the Utility Savings Initiative for State Facilities, the energy office's program for cost savings at state and university facilities.

The honor was announced Tuesday during the council's Southern Legislative Conference annual meeting in Williamsburg, Va. A total of 113 programs were nominated for the award for innovation by state governments in the South.

"We were competing against all of the innovative state programs from Texas to Maryland, so we are honored to receive this recognition," said Larry Shirley, director of the State Energy Office. "It is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of hundreds of state and university employees who committed themselves to saving energy and improving our state's environment."

The Utility Savings Initiative has helped North Carolina taxpayers save \$66 million in energy costs since its inception in 2002. It was launched as one of Gov. Mike Easley's initiatives during the state's 2001 budget crisis to help stretch state funds and has grown to include all state agencies, the 16 campuses of the University of North Carolina system and, most recently, a pilot program at nine community colleges.

This lead-by-example program is accelerating its work with state buildings and broadening the effort with the goal of including all community colleges, public schools and local governments.

Headquartered in Lexington, Ky., the Council of State Governments works to develop and distribute information on best practices to all 50 states and the U.S. territories.

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