

TO: The St. Lawrence Community

FROM: President Daniel F. Sullivan

RE: Campaign for Energy Conservation

DATE: December 3, 2008

As a university we have always been mindful of the substantial amounts of energy we consume in the forms of heat and electricity and sought to reduce it. In this period of national and world economic challenge, which we feel here in Canton most directly, it is time for us to mount an even more aggressive effort to conserve heating fuel and electricity throughout our campus. Doing so successfully—changing permanently our energy-use culture on campus—is essential to protect university financial resources for use in the education of our students and essential to achieving the carbon neutrality we are committed to accomplishing through the Presidents' Climate Commitment.

So I announce today the St. Lawrence University Campaign for Energy Conservation with specific, measurable conservation targets. All students, faculty and staff must work together so that we can add a reduction in actual electricity and natural gas usage to the utility savings we are currently experiencing from declining prices, beginning as close to “now” as possible. Our 2008-09 budget estimate for heating fuel is \$2.3 million, increasing to \$2.4 million next year; our budgeted estimate for electricity is \$2.5 million, increasing to \$2.7 million next year. Due to steep worldwide decreases in demand for energy, prices have come down sharply in recent months to the point where we believe we will pay \$300,000-\$600,000 less for natural gas and electricity in 2008-09 than budgeted, assuming no change in usage. Let there be no doubt, however, that these commodity price declines are temporary—the kinds of energy prices we were paying even as recently as four months ago will return. We must act now to reduce consumption as well.

About two-thirds of the University's consumption of heating fuel happens in our centralized heating system with its equally centralized control systems. We have in the last week lowered heating temperature settings in buildings heated through our centralized system an average of two degrees, seeking to save 5% in natural gas consumption there. As you know, however, our temperature control systems are not always precise. It still may be the case that some spaces may be uncomfortably hot—or cold. Please report such situations to Facilities Operations (call Rick Scott at extension 5611 or e-mail rscott@stlawu.edu) so that we can try to manage heat in those local areas better.

The other one-third of our heating fuel consumption occurs in the many small buildings and houses owned by the University that have their own heating systems. For those buildings we are nearly finished with a comprehensive energy use audit from which we are deriving specific recommendations for alterations in heating systems and building envelopes. We will be proceeding promptly to implement those changes with the best energy savings paybacks.

Equally important in these spaces, however, will be diligence by building occupants in the lowering of heating temperature settings. We will be communicating with smaller building occupants building by building to work out a plan together.

With regard to electricity all of us must begin now an aggressive campaign to lower usage. In addition to turning lights off, continuing to replace incandescent bulbs with energy savers and or removing some bulbs, we must review our policies and practices with regard to leaving computers and associated computer equipment on and any other ways of reducing electricity consumption you might suggest as our campaign develops.

I have asked the Conservation Council to help us work out a plan for ongoing publicity of our needs and our efforts. You will be hearing more in the next days and months. But each of us needs to start now doing the obvious things within our individual control to jump start an overall campus reduction in energy consumption. Thank you in advance for what I know, because I know you, will be your very best effort in this.

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