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CEA and NSTAR Announce Unprecedented Commercial Outreach Effort

The Cambridge Energy Alliance (CEA) and NSTAR launched a commercial outreach effort today in the Cambridge small business community to promote energy efficiency measures and accompanied incentives. Over the course of the next three weeks, CEA is partnering with Northeastern University's Summer Discovery program to visit small businesses establishments throughout Cambridge.

Volunteers from the Northeastern University's Summer Discovery and the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment programs will be key participants in making this canvass a success. Volunteers will visit over 1,000 businesses in the Cambridge community, and will in turn receive valuable, hands-on community outreach and energy efficiency experience that will aid them in future endeavors.

The Cambridge commercial canvass helps businesses save money on their utility bills through energy efficiency improvements, by connecting businesses to NSTAR's Direct Install, Small Business Program.

"Our Direct Install Program for Small Businesses helped save 30 million kilowatt hours of electricity in 2009 alone," said Penni Conner, NSTAR Vice President of Customer Care. "This initiative provides free energy assessments and incentives for qualifying businesses, including discounts of up to 70% on certain efficiency measures. We believe energy efficiency is one of the best ways to reduce energy use resulting in lower customer energy bills -- a true win-win situation."

In addition to helping businesses become more energy efficient, business owners can also become eligible for participation in the Energy Business Leader program. "This summer's Commercial Canvass will be a great opportunity for local businesses to reduce their costs and help the city reduce its carbon footprint" said Lilah Glick, Director of Community Outreach at CEA. "Energy Efficiency not only makes good business sense, but the Energy Business Leader Program provides an opportunity for businesses to demonstrate their commitment to doing their part to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions."

The targets for this canvass are Cambridge's main commercial squares including: Harvard, Central, Porter, Inman, Kendall, East Cambridge, and Huron Village. This canvass, organized by CEA, is a collaboration of many institutions. CEA is working closely with NSTAR, the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, and participating Business Associations.

Terrence Smith, Director of Government Affairs, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce shared that, "We are excited about this important initiative and are eager to see the results from businesses taking steps to reduce their carbon footprints. Energy Efficiency improvements are an excellent way for businesses to improve their bottom-line during these tough economic times."

Other benefits to this program include using less energy, saving money, catching up on neglected maintenance, and even improving the comfort and productivity of staff and customers. Working with the CEA means that businesses will have easy access to rebates and incentives, access to financing options, and free guidance through the energy assessment process. The Cambridge Energy Alliance is also connecting businesses to other valuable resources in the community including the city's Façade Improvement and Better Retail Practices programs, Sustainable Business Leader Program, and New Generation Energy.

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About CEA: *The Cambridge Energy Alliance (CEA) is a city-sponsored organization created to save Cambridge residents and businesses money, while reducing Cambridge's carbon footprint. The Alliance is working with homeowners, businesses and institutions across our city to achieve unprecedented levels of energy savings and to expand clean energy sources.*

About NSTAR: *NSTAR is the largest Massachusetts-based, investor-owned electric and gas utility. The company transmits and delivers electricity and gas to 1.1 million electric customers in 81 communities and nearly 300,000 gas customers in 51 communities. NSTAR employs more than 3,000 employees. For more information, visit www.nstar.com*