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***Federal stimulus dollars to save energy, create green jobs  
in Georgia's faith community:  
Georgia Interfaith Power & Light launches Power Wise***

ATLANTA – Every religion can agree on this. Protecting creation by saving money just makes good sense. Thanks to an innovative use of federal stimulus money, **Georgia Interfaith Power & Light** launches **Power Wise** to greatly increase its capacity to help congregations of every faith save energy.

Almost 50 congregations have already enrolled in Power Wise to receive energy audits and track their improved performance over several years. Georgia Interfaith Power & Light, known as **GIPL**, (pronounced *gipple*) was awarded **\$400,000** in a two-year contract from the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act** (the Federal Stimulus Program) administered by the **Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA)** with an additional **\$200,000 match from The Kendeda Fund**.

Among the groups singing their praises are Baptists, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Presbyterians and Unitarians. Power Wise is one of 16 projects selected among 130 applications to Georgia's State Energy Program with this round of grants totaling almost \$82.5 million.

"We are not an environmental group," says **Alexis Chase, GIPL's executive director**. "We are a faith organization that helps all communities of faith be responsible stewards of our shared natural resources." Over time, Chase's ultimate goal is to assist every one of Georgia's **15,000 places of worship** to reduce their power bills and put

those savings to better use. “Every congregation we have ever worked with is spending too much on energy,” she goes on. “That’s money that could be spent to feed the hungry, house the homeless and advance their mission.” Using less energy also reduces air pollution which protects air and water quality. The end result is healthier habitats for every species, not just people. **Noah** would be proud.

**Overview of the Power Wise program:**

- for a modest fee in the \$200 range, Power Wise energy professionals will conduct an energy audit to establish each congregation’s current energy performance and find opportunities for improvement;
- Power Wise will help establish an energy efficiency plan customized to each congregation’s buildings, working directly with facility managers and congregation members;
- provide grant funding and project management for congregations to actually make energy efficiency upgrades to their facilities;
- educate almost 200 individual congregants across Georgia on how to assess their energy use at home, motivating “the people in pews” to incorporate energy efficiency into their daily lives;
- and the Power Wise team will analyze data in **ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager** to help congregations see how much energy they are saving every month in easy-to-understand reports

Other GIPL partners include **Oliver Ferrari** of **MarionEco** who created a streamlined energy data collection and analysis system especially for Power Wise participants. **Gary Gabriel** of **CDH Partners** will lead the audit team for large congregations while **Abe Kruger** of **Kruger Sustainability Group** will audit small congregations and educate home auditors during the two-year program, which is designed to be self-sufficient within five years. Environmental sustainability veteran **Bob Donaghue** joined GIPL’s staff as Power Wise program director.

The **Interfaith Power & Light** (IPL) movement began in California and has grown to 38 state affiliates. Yet, **Georgia Interfaith Power & Light's Power Wise** program is the most comprehensive energy savings program out there. "No other organization in the country is offering congregations of every faith a detailed road map to systematically reduce their energy use," Chase explains.

Demand for Power Wise assistance is expected to be tremendous. Find out how your congregation can join the effort by registering at [www.gipl.org](http://www.gipl.org) or call 404-588-9978.

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*For interviews, high quality photographs and a list of Power Wise congregations, please contact Lisa Frank, Frank Relations at 404-255-8567 or [lisafrank@frankrelations.com](mailto:lisafrank@frankrelations.com)*

#### Suggested people to interview

- Alexis Chase, executive director, Georgia Interfaith Power & Light
- Bob Donaghue, program director, Power Wise, Georgia Interfaith Power & Light
- Reverend Gerald Durley, Providence Missionary Baptist Church, Atlanta
- Rabbi Frederick Reeves, The Temple, Atlanta