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## Boldt Co. welcomed into Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Green Tier program

### Appleton builder recognized for eco-operations

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APPLETON — Going green may be the catalyst the state seeks to spark job creation and improve Wisconsin's environment, the state's environmental chief says.

The Boldt Co. in Appleton, a building and general contracting company, has seen the benefits of conservation and adopting processes that reduce a building's impact on its natural surroundings.

Since 2001, the company has grown its roster of professionals with varying degrees of expertise in eco-friendly design to more than two dozen and has built numerous buildings in recent years that have received acclaim for their low energy consumption and the use of recycled materials during construction.

"When a company decides to look at its entire environmental footprint, in many cases it ends up improving their bottom line and their environmental performance in a way we can't through regulations," said Matt Frank, secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources.

Frank was among local and state dignitaries at Boldt's headquarters Friday as the company was welcomed into the DNR's Green Tier initiative, which has a goal of preserving the environment while also promoting economic growth.

"When a company commits to Green Tier, it's a huge step forward," Frank said.

Green Tier, a voluntary program, was signed into law in 2004. It encourages regulated and unregulated businesses to move beyond environmental compliance to better preserve natural resources.

About 30 companies are now part of Green Tier.

Frank did not discuss specific savings companies would see by adopting more green processes but said there are ways companies can gauge how much money they could save.

"Energy conservation is an easy way to document savings," he said. "When you take a look at that, then you can start to examine waste streams and see the benefits of recycling ... those kinds of things once looked at as costs can potentially turn into profits."

Tom Boldt, chief executive officer at Boldt Co., said protecting the environment is a growing issue.

"By doing some good things and by voluntarily saying you're committed to it, that will further promote the importance of sustainability," he said.

Boldt said the company began adopting more environmental practices in the late 1990s.

"As we look to the future, we have to do more to protect the resources that we have," he said.

Boldt said some projects his firm has been involved with made every effort to ensure building materials were acquired as close to the building site as possible to limit transportation, which reduced costs but also meant less fuel use, less pollution.

"More people are aware of how even the smallest things can make a difference," he said.

Rep. Steve Kagen, D-Appleton, said there is greater awareness today to protect the environment.

"Our climate is changing," he said.

Kagen shared a story about how permafrost in Alaska has been melting in recent years, making the ground too soft, which has led some communities there to relocate to more stable land.

"We need to devote more resources to developing smart electrical grids and buildings," he said. "We need buildings and systems that use less resources to make power and can put power back into the grid."

Boldt is heavily involved in wind energy development. The company has erected about 700 wind energy turbines around the upper Midwest in recent years.

Frank said Wisconsin businesses need to find opportunities to develop green technology.

"It's really an opportunity for us to be a leader in this field because we have companies (like Boldt) ... we can grow green jobs here," he said.

## Additional Facts

More information about the state Department of Natural Resources' Green Tier program is at [dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cea/environmental](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cea/environmental).

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