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EPA Presents Energy Star Small Business Award to Ontario, N.Y. Plastics Company

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Contact Information:

(#03020) New York, N.Y. -- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today presented an Energy Star Small Business award to Harbec Plastics, Inc., an Ontario, New York-based manufacturer of plastic parts that has integrated environmental programs and technologies into its day-to-day operations. Kevin Bricke, Regional Deputy Director for Environmental Planning and Protection, presented the award to Harbec president Bob Bechtold at a kickoff event for the Rochester Green Business Network earlier today.

"Harbec Plastics' successful use of energy efficient technologies throughout its facility is proof that what's good for the environment can be very good for the bottom line," said EPA's Bricke. "The company's innovations save about \$50,000 a year and prevent 750,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the air annually. EPA is proud to spread the word to other businesses about the benefits of making the change to more environmentally-friendly processes."

Over the past several years, Harbec Plastics has made several major energy efficiency and resource conservation upgrades to its 48,000 square foot manufacturing facility:

installation of a micro-turbine generating plant that runs on compressed natural gas to produce electricity for its facility. The heat created by these turbines is then used to heat the building through radiant in-floor heating systems and forced air systems. In warm weather, air-conditioning is created by an absorption chiller, which uses the waste heat from the turbines. Harbec's energy efficient technologies have saved over 446,000 kW of electricity. Its energy independence also makes it much less vulnerable to power outages and brown-outs;

installation of a 250 kW wind turbine that provides 25% of its electricity. These turbines make excellent use of an endlessly renewable natural resource wind and have zero resulting emissions. Harbec's wind turbine eliminates about 375 tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually;

- upgrading its lighting system to energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), T-8 fluorescent fixtures and high-pressure sodium lighting;
- installation of occupancy sensors and the construction of windows and skylights to increase day lighting where possible;
- purchasing "hybrid" vehicles and cars that run on clean natural gas and electricity. Eighty percent of the company's vehicle fleet is "green";
- selling scrap plastic produced from manufacturing processes to a plastics recycler, where it is manufactured into "black" plastic lumber; and
- the recent construction of a "green" warehouse that meets many of the requirements of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system.

ENERGY STAR is a program backed by EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy that helps businesses and individuals protect the environment through superior energy efficiency. The Small Business awards are given annually to companies around the country that have demonstrated an outstanding concern for the environment and make use of the technologies to reduce pollution and limit the use of natural resources.

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