Governor Patrick Quinn declared October 14th-20th as Careers in Energy Week in Illinois. The Energy Learning Exchange, in cooperation with the Illinois Energy Workforce Consortium, coordinated the week with schools, companies, and organizations as part of the Center for Energy Workforce Development’s nationwide effort to highlight careers in the energy field.

Careers in Energy Week activities were designed to excite middle school and high school students about energy, how energy companies operate, types of energy related careers available now and in the future, and the importance of energy companies in the local economy.

These photos were taken when Dr. David Loomis (Director of the Energy Learning Exchange, and Professor of Economics at Illinois State University) spoke about energy to middle school classes led by teacher Karie Tess at Urbana School District #116. Students also enjoyed experimenting with Kill-A-Watt meters to determine watts used in household appliances they brought in to test, and then making calculations of what costs for running each item could be over the course of a year.

Special thank you to other speakers that presented at schools during the week, including: Christopher Rosso and Amanda Stenson (Exelon Generation - Braidwood Station) at Manteno Community Unit School District #5, Sarah Faller and Athena Lane (Exelon Generation - Byron Station) at Freeport School District #145, Steven Smith (Farnsworth Group) at Riverview Consolidated School District #2, Jonathan Nieuwsma (CS2 Renewable Energy) at Fox Lake Grade School District #114, Tom Wolf (Energy Council, Illinois Chamber of Commerce) at John Hersey High School District #214, and Brad Richards (Illinois Oil & Gas Association) at Webber Township High School District #25. Other companies and organizations also coordinated their own events around the state, including the National Corn to Enthanol Research Center at Southern Illinois University and Illinois Energy Workforce Consortium members including Nicor Gas, Ameren Illinois, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, ComEd, Mt. Carmel Public Utility Company, Peoples Gas, and Primera.
Careers in Energy Week Numbers

The Energy Learning Exchange website tracked visits to the new Careers in Energy Week page, including to a page of Illinois Energy Careers Data and a page of Class Materials available for teachers to download and utilize in their classrooms that week. A form was also provided for teachers to place an order for a speaker to present in their classrooms. The site will continue to provide data and materials at www.Energy.IllinoisState.edu/Careers.

From September 1st through October 30th, the Energy Learning Exchange website was accessed 1,862 times, with 622 visits to the Careers in Energy Week page, which led to Career Data files opened or downloaded 125 times, and 48 Classroom Materials files opened or downloaded, including curriculum links, presentation files, and videos.

Careers in Energy Week school kits were mailed to 153 teachers across the state that participated in Illinois State University’s energy related programs to date (WIP 5, Wind for Schools, or Solar for Schools), or schools at which that participating companies were presenting. Each kit included a t-shirt for the participating teacher, posters for display in the school, pencils and pencil sharpeners for students, and a notebook or deck of energy career cards to use as a student prize that week.

Industry and organization representatives that spoke for Careers in Energy Week at the schools, or provided tours, as well as teachers that requested speakers, have been asked to provide feedback regarding their experiences during the event. The feedback requested includes topics presented, grades reached, the number of students that attended the events, and comments. Report forms are still in the process of being collected, and the results will be compiled soon.

ELE Exhibited or Presented at Events:
- Illinois Science Education Conference - Illinois Science Teachers Association
- 8th Grade Career Expo - Bloomington Area Career Center
- STEMfest - Northern Illinois University
- Common Vision, Common Goals Conference