

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

136 State Capitol Building
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 866 - 2471
(303) 866 - 2003 fax



Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2008

CONTACTS

Evan Dreyer, 720.350.8370, evan.dreyer@state.co.us
Megan Castle, 303.866.22652, megan.castle@state.co.us

GOV. RITTER MARKS SCHOOL'S TRANSITION FROM COAL TO GEO-EXCHANGE & WOODY BIOMASS HEAT SYSTEMS

OAK CREEK — Gov. Bill Ritter today celebrated the transition from an antiquated coal-fired furnace at Soroco High School to a modern geo-exchange and woody biomass heating system. The South Routt School District is shutting down one of the last hand-operated, coal-fired furnaces at a public school in Colorado.

Gov. Ritter marked the occasion at a school-wide assembly and community lunch featuring the school's student-run Green Team. "It's clear you have a vision about your future and about how we can build a New Energy Economy that blends education with renewables with healthy forests," Gov. Ritter told students at the assembly. "It's a perfect trifecta."

"South Routt will be the first school district to use woody biomass pellets for heating," Gov. Ritter added. "This will support Colorado's new pellet industry and our efforts to create healthier forests and handle the beetle kill. These pellets will be made in nearby Kremmling, further developing our New Energy Economy and increasing the number of jobs in rural communities."

Led by Director Tom Plant, the Governor's Energy Office helped the South Routt School District hire The McKinstry Co. as the private contractor for the project and secure several state grants. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs is providing \$625,000 and the Colorado Department of Education is providing \$1.5 million toward the overall project cost of \$4.1 million. The project also includes the installation of additional energy efficiency and conservation components, such as new lighting.

Students, teachers and the community will benefit from the transition from coal to geo-exchange and biomass in the form of a healthier environment free of exposure to coal dust, ash and soot; reduced school maintenance and utility costs of \$15,000 a year; and 977 fewer tons of carbon-dioxide emissions each year.

At today's school assembly, The McKinstry Co. announced it will be awarding two \$1,000 scholarships to members of the 2008 graduating class.

###