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## Comfort Systems USA launches upstate offices

By Kevin Tampone

Journal Staff

DeWITT — Comfort Systems USA Energy Services opened three upstate New York offices in January, including one in the Syracuse area.

Comfort Systems USA is a major national heating, ventilation, and cooling company headquartered in Houston. Its Energy Services division works with customers on energy efficiency. At the beginning of January, the division opened offices in Buffalo, Albany, and DeWitt (6500 New Venture Gear Drive).

The local office is in the 62,000-square-foot facility of Woodcock & Armani, the local Comfort Systems contractor and service provider.

Each of the three upstate offices has three employees, says Albert LaValley, a program manager with Comfort Systems USA's Energy Services division.

One of the main reasons for the new offices in New York is the division's work with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), LaValley says. The unit works with NYSERDA and developers to

help make low-income, multi-family housing more energy efficient.

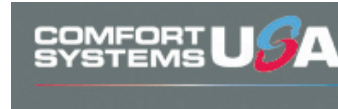
A number of government grant programs aimed at developers of low-income housing require them to partner with groups like NYSERDA and consider energy efficiency in their building plans, LaValley says.

The Energy Services division had been working Upstate for about six months and eventually got to the point where it needed people in the region full time, he adds. The three offices provide services to the entire state.

LaValley says the issue of energy efficiency is not going anywhere. He notes that high oil prices last summer woke everyone up.

And while oil and gas prices have receded sharply since then, the issue of efficiency stayed at the forefront of many minds.

President Obama has made energy efficiency a central piece of the economic stimulus plan working its way through Congress, LaValley adds. The \$825 billion plan includes more than \$6 billion



to help weatherize more than 1 million homes.

"This is not something that's going away," LaValley says.

The Energy Services division has seen solid growth in recent months and LaValley says that growth should continue.

The division provides a range of services including project design, economic analysis, energy audits, help optimizing heating and cooling systems, and more.

Comfort Systems USA (NYSE: FIX) earned \$13.8 million companywide in the third quarter of 2008, up from \$11.5 million a year earlier. The firm generated more than \$348 million in revenue in the period, up from more than \$286 million a year earlier.

The firm has not yet released its full-year earnings for 2008.

In 2007, the company earned \$32.5 million and generated \$1.1 billion in revenue. The company has 74 locations in 59 cities around the country. □

Contact **Tampone** at [ktampone@cnybj.com](mailto:ktampone@cnybj.com)