



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contacts:**

**Shari Gasper** | Director of Communications and Editorial Content | [sgasper@overture.org](mailto:sgasper@overture.org) | 608.443.1756

**Mary Cait McManamon** | Social Media and Editorial Content Manager | [mmcmanamon@overture.org](mailto:mmcmanamon@overture.org) | 608.665.9367

[Click here to visit our online Media Room.](#)



## **Overture Center recognized for its water conservation practices, named a Climate Champion**

**Madison, Wis.** (Sept. X, 2024) — Overture Center for the Arts achieved **2024 Climate Champion** (1 star/Water Saving Practices) status for a variety of water conservation practices, including our use of efficient water softeners and conservative salt usage.

The recognition was presented to Overture Center by Dane County Executive Jamie Kuhn and the Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC) for leading climate action through the Dane County Climate Champions program. This year, OECC presented **32 Climate Champions awards to 20 entities**. The Climate Champions program recognizes the leadership of local entities that take significant action to

reduce carbon emissions. The objective of the Dane County Climate Action Plan is to cut countywide emissions in half by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Earlier this year, in collaboration with 1901 Plumbing Inc., our facilities team completed the installation of **four cutting-edge water softeners and four large brine tanks**. This accomplishment reflects our commitment to sustainability and responsible resource management.

Each water softener handles 14,500 gallons, totaling one million gallons of water per month. Water flows through the system, into the brine tanks, back into the softeners and then to our plumbing fixtures. Without softeners, hard water leaves lime and scale on valves and fixtures, causing damage to our 495,000 square feet of plumbing. The new system protects these fixtures, helping to maintain a healthy facility and extend the life of our plumbing fixtures as well as kitchen appliances and laundry machines.

**View the video: [Overture Forever Water Softener Tour](#).**

“At Overture Center, we understand the critical role that sustainable practices play in the long-term health of both our building and our environment,” said Director of Facilities Tony Wantoch. “We want to focus on holistic water conservation through pairing up strategies. By installing water softeners and incorporating ionized water for cleaning, we are taking significant steps toward reducing our environmental impact.”

Softened water allows our systems to run more efficiently, conserving both water and energy, while also extending the life of our equipment. Additionally, ionized water for cleaning enables us to reduce the use of harsh chemicals, improving indoor air quality and minimizing pollutants in our wastewater.

“These initiatives are not just about cutting costs; they’re about protecting our environment and creating a healthier space for our community,” said Wantoch. “Sustainability is a shared responsibility, and we’re proud to lead by example.”

### **Reduction in Water Use**

- Hard water causes scale buildup in pipes and equipment, leading to increased water use due to inefficiencies in heating and cooling systems. By softening water, we can reduce water waste in these systems.
- On average, water-softened systems can see up to a 20-30% reduction in water consumption in boilers, cooling towers and other water-based equipment.

### **Energy Savings**

- Soft water allows water heaters and other systems to work more efficiently by reducing scale buildup.
- Just 1/16-inch of scale on a water heater's coils can lead to a 15% decrease in efficiency, causing increased energy consumption.
- With softer water, heating systems use less energy to reach the desired temperature, contributing to a lower carbon footprint from Overture.

### **Extended Equipment Lifespan**

- Water softeners help reduce the wear and tear on our pipes, fixtures and appliances. The absence of scale buildup can extend the life of boilers, HVAC systems and plumbing by up to 40%.

- This reduces the need for replacements, indirectly conserving resources tied to manufacturing and transportation of new equipment while maximizing Overture's Forever Campaign.

#### **Reduction in Chemical Use**

- Soft water reduces the amount of soap, detergent and cleaning agents required for maintenance. Up to 50% less cleaning agents may be needed for tasks such as washing, contributing to fewer chemicals entering wastewater streams and a lower environmental impact.
- Overture encompasses this approach with ionized water to reduce agents by almost 70%.

The new water softeners and brine tanks are part of several capital projects planned as Overture Center celebrates 20 years. The **Overture Forever Campaign**, now underway, aims to raise \$30 million to address capital needs and grow Overture's endowment, ensuring the center stays a vibrant and welcoming space for future generations. For information on how to support Overture's sustainability efforts, visit our [Overture Forever Campaign](#) page.

To learn more about the 2024 Climate Champions, visit the [Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change website](#) and the related [Climate Champions map](#).

**OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS** in Madison, Wis., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization that features seven state-of-the-art performance spaces and four galleries where national and international touring artists, nine resident companies and hundreds of local artists engage people in more than 500,000 educational and artistic experiences each year. Overture's mission is to support and elevate our community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts. [overture.org](https://overture.org)

###