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**HealthFitness guides incentives strategy to spark participation in American Electric Power's employee health and wellness initiative**

*New issue brief highlights AEP program, outlines elements for success*

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN July 31, 2008**— Employers are increasingly using incentives as the carrot to engage employees in worksite health and productivity programs. A new issue brief from HealthFitness (OTC BB: HFIT) zeros in on the use of incentives to fuel participation in a new health and wellness program American Electric Power (AEP) launched in 2007 to lower health care costs and improve the productivity of the utility's 21,000 employees.

When AEP took into consideration its aging workforce and the cost impact of poor health on both safety and productivity, the decision to begin a structured, fully developed health and productivity program was simple.

HealthFitness manages the AEP Wellness...Energy for Life program for the utility, which includes nearly 500 work sites across 11 states. The program includes health screenings, educational programs and fitness initiatives. Employees and their spouses who are at risk for chronic disease are also invited to take part in HealthFitness's EMPOWERED® health coaching, which is delivered face-to-face, telephonically and over the Web. HealthFitness is a leading provider of employee health management programs. Managing more than 400 fitness centers globally, the company also offers a suite of health management services on-site, Web-based and telephonically.

"We consider HealthFitness to be a partner and a trusted advisor with us for the program," said Curt Cooper, director of benefits for AEP. "We recognized early on that, while we're very knowledgeable about providing electricity, we didn't have the expertise we needed in the area of wellness. HealthFitness has the ability to provide us with wellness professionals on the ground and a lot of expertise in designing and rolling out the program."

Because participation is the key to program success, HealthFitness recommended that AEP offer an attractive incentive for employees who completed a health risk assessment, resulting in a 65 percent employee completion rate. The \$150 gift card incentive, made available for both employees and spouses, was administered by HealthFitness. While individual results are reported confidentially to those who completed the HRA, aggregate data about population health risks compiled from the results was used to plan education programs and tailor the AEP wellness program to fit company needs.

"Incentives can unlock challenges to employee participation, combined with top executive support for the program, strong leadership and positive communication that reaches every employee," said Gregg O. Lehman, Ph.D. HealthFitness president and CEO. "AEP structured its

program to engage both the leadership and program champions at every location, which resulted in very positive first year program success."

The issue brief, "***Incentives- A Spark that Ignites Program Participation, Engagement and Results***," also includes a checklist of five key truths employers should know about incentives. AEP is already implementing one of the key truths, the need to raise the bar for employees to earn the incentive year over year. The AEP wellness program has proposed that next year employees be required to participate in health screenings and at least one AEP-sponsored program, as well as completion of the HRA, to earn the full \$150 gift card reward.

To read more or to access the HealthFitness issue briefs go to <http://www.hfit.com/briefs.cfm>.

### **About HealthFitness**

HealthFitness is a leading provider of employee health improvement services to Fortune 500 companies, the health care industry and individual consumers. Serving clients for more than 30 years, HealthFitness partners with employers to effectively manage their health care and productivity costs by improving individual health and well-being. HealthFitness serves more than 300 clients globally via on-site management and remotely via Web and telephonic services. HealthFitness provides a complete portfolio of health and fitness management solutions including a proprietary health risk assessment platform, screenings, EMPOWERED™ Health Coaching and delivery of health improvement programs. HealthFitness employs more than 3,000 health and fitness professionals in national and international locations who are committed to the company's mission of "*improving the health and well-being of the people we serve.*" For more information on HealthFitness, visit [www.hfit.com](http://www.hfit.com).

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