



Local Leadership Toward Solving Climate Change

Beacon Award: Local Leadership Toward Solving Climate Change

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION & RECOGNITION

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Links found throughout this document are clickable when viewing on a computer. Links are also accessible using the online version of this document at www.ca-ilq.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines.

Program Overview

1. What is the Beacon Award?

The Beacon Award recognizes and celebrates California cities and counties that:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use;
- Adopt policies and programs to address climate change; and
- Promote sustainability.

Cities and counties will be honored with Silver, Gold and Platinum Beacon Awards for achieving specified measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and energy savings in agency facilities and by achieving measurable greenhouse gas reductions and promoting energy conservation in the community. They will also be recognized for achieving interim accomplishments.

2. Who is sponsoring the Beacon Award?

The Beacon Award is sponsored by the California Climate Action Network, a program of the Institute for Local Government. The Institute is the non-profit research and education arm of the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties.

The program is funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.



3. Why should my agency participate in the Beacon Award?

Participating in the Beacon Award lets cities and counties receive recognition for saving energy, conserving resources, promoting sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It lets them shine a bright light on their accomplishments for their residents, colleagues and others. To hear what local officials are saying about participating in the Beacon Award program, visit www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Testimonials.

4. How can my agency participate in the Beacon Award?

Becoming a Beacon Award participant is a simple process. We welcome agencies at every step of the climate action journey to consider applying. To be accepted as a Beacon Award participant, cities and counties will complete a simple [application form](#) and do the following:

- Adopt a [resolution](#) by the governing body committing the agency to participate in the program;
- Designate a lead staff person as a point of contact;
- Prepare, or commit to prepare, a baseline greenhouse gas emissions inventory for agency facilities and the community as a whole (previously completed inventories using a commonly accepted methodology will be accepted);
- Prepare, or commit to prepare, a climate action plan that includes actions in each of the [Best Practice Areas](#) (previously completed plans using a commonly accepted methodology will be accepted); and
- Demonstrate compliance with AB 939, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989.

There is no deadline to apply; applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis.

For an application to participate, sample resolution and sample staff report, [click here](#). Once accepted a city or county will be designated as a Beacon Award program participant. It will then begin working toward achieving the first Beacon Award level.

5. What are the criteria for the Silver, Gold and Platinum Beacon Awards?

To become a Beacon Award winner, agencies must achieve specified measurable greenhouse gas reductions and energy savings in agency facilities, and achieve specified measurable greenhouse gas reductions and promote energy conservation activities in the community. The agency will also complete activities in each of the Best Practice Areas. The minimum requirements listed on the next page must be completed to receive the respective award. We will also recognize and celebrate interim achievements.

Silver Beacon Award

Agency facilities and operations

Greenhouse gas reduction: Five percent in agency facilities and operations

Energy savings: Five percent in agency facilities and operations from energy efficiency retrofits

Community

Greenhouse gas reduction: Five percent in the community as a whole

Energy efficiency: One activity that promotes energy efficiency in the community

Best Practice Areas One activity in each of the Best Practice Areas

Gold Beacon Award

Agency facilities and operations

Greenhouse gas reduction: Ten percent in agency facilities and operations

Energy savings: Ten percent in agency facilities and operations from energy efficiency retrofits

Community

Greenhouse gas reduction: Ten percent in the community as a whole

Energy efficiency: Two activities that promote energy efficiency in the community

Best Practice Areas Two activities in each of the Best Practice Areas

Platinum Beacon Award	
Agency facilities and operations	
Greenhouse gas reduction:	Twenty percent in agency facilities and operations
Energy savings:	Twenty percent in agency facilities and operations from energy efficiency retrofits
Community	
Greenhouse gas reduction:	Twenty percent in the community as a whole
Energy efficiency:	Four activities that promote energy efficiency in the community
Best Practice Areas	Three activities in each of the Best Practice Areas

6. Will there be an additional Beacon Award above the Platinum (20%) level?

Yes. Once a city or county achieves the Platinum Beacon Award, we will establish the Diamond Beacon Award reflecting a higher greenhouse gas and energy savings goal.

7. What do we do once our agency has been accepted into the Beacon Award program?

Once a city or county is accepted as a Beacon Award participant, it will work towards achieving one or more of the three award levels at its own pace. Understanding that each agency has its own unique opportunities and challenges, there is no timeline for meeting award level criteria. However, participants will be asked to provide periodic information about their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy, as well as progress in completing a greenhouse gas inventory and climate action plan. Visit www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Participants to see who is participating and learn about their climate action activities.

8. What are the Best Practice Areas that need to be included in a climate action plan?

The Best Practice Areas, which are based upon the Institute's Climate Action and Sustainability Best Practices Framework, are:

1. Energy Efficiency and Conservation;
2. Water and Waste Water Systems;
3. Green Building;
4. Waste Reduction and Recycling;
5. Climate-Friendly Purchasing;
6. Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels;
7. Efficient Transportation;

8. Land Use and Community Design;
9. Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emissions;
10. Promoting Community and Individual Action.

Visit www.ca-ilg.org/ClimatePractices to download the Best Practices Framework. In order to receive the Silver, Gold or Platinum Beacon Award, the agency must meet the greenhouse gas and energy savings for each award level and demonstrate that it has completed activities in each of the Best Practice Areas. [Click here for award level criteria.](#)

9. Where can I get ideas for activities in the Best Practice Areas?

[The Institute's Best Practices Framework](#) offers a wide range of activity ideas in each of the ten best practice areas.

10. Are we limited to doing only the activities included in Best Practices Framework?

No. The activities in the Best Practices Framework are suggestions for activities, programs and policies. It is designed to recognize the variability of agencies and the need for options. Local agencies are encouraged to be innovative and undertake other activities that meet local conditions. Be sure to share your innovative programs, policies and activities with Beacon Award staff so that others can learn about it as well.

11. Is there a sample resolution we can use for the application?

Yes. [Click here for a sample resolution.](#) The resolution can be modified to fit the needs of individual agencies.

12. What kinds of recognition will my agency receive for participating in the Beacon Award?

Beacon Award program participants will receive recognition for participating in the program, as well as for achieving interim accomplishments and reaching one or more of the award levels. They will receive special recognition at League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties events, be highlighted on the Beacon Award website, and receive certificates and other materials for use at agency facilities and on agency websites. We will also help participants let their residents know about the leadership activities.

13. Is there a specific timeline for achieving a Beacon Award level?

No. Participation in the Beacon Award program does not require that a city or county identify a target year or timeline when it expects to reach an award level. Whether or not to identify a timeline for reaching an award level is for the local agency to decide.

For example, an agency may decide to set 2012 as the date it hopes to reach the Silver Award level or 2015 to reach the Gold Award level. However, there is no penalty if it does not achieve

the greenhouse gas reductions and energy savings by those dates. The agency will be encouraged to continue its efforts to reach the respective award level when it is able to do so.

Or, the agency may decide to participate in the program and not set a date by when it wants to achieve a specific award level. As long as the agency demonstrates that it is making a good faith effort to implement its climate action plan, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy, it will be considered a Beacon Award program participant in good standing.

14. What happens when we think we have reached a Beacon Award level? How do we demonstrate our achievement?

When an agency thinks it has reached a Beacon Award level it should:

1. Conduct a second greenhouse gas inventory for agency facilities and the community to verify the greenhouse gas reduction percentage;
2. Determine the energy savings from energy efficiency retrofits for agency facilities. Before calculating the energy savings, be sure to check with your utility provider. [See section more information about calculating energy savings in agency facilities](#);
3. Identify the activities undertaken to promote energy conservation in the community;
4. Identify the activities undertaken in each of the Best Practice Areas; and
5. Provide the information to the Beacon Award program.

Once an agency has achieved an award level, it will be encouraged to continue its great work to achieve the next level.

15. Our agency has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy savings from energy retrofits by five percent for agency facilities. Can we receive any recognition for this achievement?

Congratulations! A city or county that demonstrates it has reduced greenhouse gas emissions and energy savings by five percent in agency facilities and operations will be eligible to receive interim recognition while it continues working to complete the remaining criteria for the Silver Beacon Award.

16. If we have not reached an award level, what do we do to continue to participate in the program?

We recognize that it will take time for agencies to reach an award level. In order to continue to be considered a Beacon Award program participant, the local agency will be asked periodically to describe the progress it is making toward achieving a Beacon Award level. This may include, for example, providing information about the status of the agency's greenhouse gas inventory and climate action plan or demonstrating that it is making a good faith effort to implement programs designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy.

17. Where do we get information about selecting a base year, conducting a greenhouse gas inventory, preparing a climate action plan and measuring energy savings?

View the Beacon Award program guidelines at www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines for more detailed information regarding base year selections and links to additional resources. Also visit www.californiaseec.org to register for free greenhouse gas inventory and climate action planning trainings offered through the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative.

18. My community is served by a municipal electric or gas utility. May we participate in the Beacon Award?

Yes. The Beacon Award is open to any city or county in California.

Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Climate Action Plans and Other Details

19. What is a greenhouse gas emissions inventory?

A greenhouse gas emissions inventory is a way of identifying and understanding the sources and amounts of greenhouse gas emissions produced by an agency's facilities and operations or in the community as a whole. For example, a greenhouse gas inventory for agency facilities and operations looks at energy use in agency buildings and facilities, fleet vehicles, water and waste water facilities (if appropriate to the agency), solid waste and recycling activities, and other operations. A greenhouse gas inventory for the community examines such areas as community-wide energy use, vehicle miles traveled, land use and community design, solid waste and recycling practices, and other community-wide activities that produce greenhouse gas emissions. [Click here to access key resources for conducting greenhouse gas emissions inventories.](#)

20. What is a climate action plan?

A climate action plan is a roadmap to guide activities and policies designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By establishing a climate action plan, local agencies can identify policies, programs and practices that fit the unique nature of their community and agency. A climate action plan is connected to a greenhouse gas inventory because the inventory identifies the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions that might provide the greatest opportunity for reductions. Of course, other factors, such as cost effectiveness and feasibility, are important to consider when preparing a climate action plan that is right for an individual community. [Click here to access key resources for developing climate action plans.](#)

21. Where can we get information about how to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory and prepare a climate action plan?

Information and resources for conducting a greenhouse gas inventory and preparing a climate action plan are available from several sources. They all are included on the California Climate Action Network website.

The following are the primary resources for greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans.

- [ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability](#). ICLEI will be offering workshops and webinars to help cities and counties prepare greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans. [Information about the workshop schedule will be available on the Beacon Award webpage as it becomes available.](#)

ICLEI's statewide efforts to help cities and counties participating in the Beacon Award are part of the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative (SEEC), an alliance to help cities and counties reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy. SEEC is a statewide collaboration between the Institute for Local Government, the Local Government Commission, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Pacific Gas

and Electric Company, San Diego Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company. [Click here to learn more about SEEC.](#)

- [Local Government Protocol](#) – a tool prepared in partnership between the California Air Resources Board, the California Climate Action Registry, the Climate Registry and ICLEI for accounting and reporting greenhouse gas emissions from a local agency’s operations.
- Cool California offers a variety of “how-to” resources to assist local agencies, businesses and individuals in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [The Local Government Toolkit](#) includes a useful discussion about greenhouse gas inventories and climate action planning.

22. My agency has already conducted a greenhouse gas inventory and climate action plan? Can we use them to meet the requirement for participating?

Yes, existing inventories and climate action plans can be used for the Beacon Award, as long as the inventory used a “commonly accepted methodology” (see question 25) and the climate action plan includes activities in each of the [Best Practice Areas](#).

23. My agency has not conducted a greenhouse gas inventory or prepared a climate action plan. May we still participate in the Beacon Award program?

Yes. Your agency may participate by committing to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory and prepare a climate action plan. In the meantime, your agency can undertake activities that save energy, conserve resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions – all of which will help the agency get a head start on implementing programs as part of the agency’s Beacon Award activities. Ideas for activities are included in the California Climate Action Network’s [Best Practices Framework](#).

24. The Beacon Award program participation guidelines say that an agency must either have prepared or “commit to” prepare a greenhouse gas inventory and a climate action plan. What does this mean?

The Beacon Award program recognizes that many local agencies have not conducted a greenhouse gas inventory or prepared a climate action plan and that doing so takes time. Thus, the application requests that interested agencies indicate their commitment to preparing a greenhouse gas inventory and climate action plan. They will be asked to demonstrate periodic progress in completing these tasks.

25. What does a “commonly accepted methodology” mean for preparing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory?

Several commonly accepted methodologies are available to prepare a greenhouse gas inventory. They are listed below. Previously completed inventories that used an earlier ICLEI, Climate Registry or other accepted methodology will be accepted as well.

“Commonly accepted methodology” includes the following.

- [ICLEI’s](#) methodology.
- The [“Local Government Protocol”](#), developed by the California Air Resources Board, ICLEI and The Climate Registry.
- Methodologies for community-wide inventories are still evolving. ICLEI’s methodology will be accepted until the California Air Resources Board adopts a new methodology.
- Other greenhouse gas inventory methodologies, such as those done by consultants, will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. The local agency may be asked to provide documentation about the methodology’s accuracy.

26. What is the base year we should use to measure our greenhouse gas reductions?

Agencies may select their own base-year for measuring initial greenhouse gas emissions. However, the following information and suggestions may help agencies in deciding what base year to select.

- For a new greenhouse gas emissions inventory, it is preferred and recommended to use the same base year for your energy savings activities. Note that SCE recommends 2004 as the base-year to be consistent with its Energy Leader Model program. However, we will accept another year if the agency has *already completed* its greenhouse gas inventory using an earlier base year.
- Many greenhouse gas inventories currently being prepared for local agency operations or the community use 2005 as a base-year, although some use base-years as early as 2003 or as recent as 2009.
- The difficulties of using a base year earlier than 2003 to prepare a *new* greenhouse gas inventory relate to the availability of accurate data to convert energy usage into greenhouse gas emissions. Even though pre-2003 electricity and natural gas usage information may be available, the ability to convert that information into tons of greenhouse gas emissions is not feasible. This is because prior to 2003 the accuracy of the emissions factors needed to translate energy use into tons of greenhouse gas emissions declines.

Remember however, an agency that wants to use a *completed* greenhouse gas inventory that used ICLEI’s or another commonly accepted methodology may do so regardless of the base-year used.

27. Can we get credit for past activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or energy savings?

Yes, with some limitations. Since the local agency may select the base year from which to measure greenhouse gas emissions, that will determine how much “credit” it gets for past activities. Similarly, the local agency may select the base year from which energy savings in

agency facilities are measured, except no base year may be earlier than 2005. Thus, energy efficiency retrofit activities from 2005 forward may be included in the energy savings calculation. [Click here for more discussion of selecting a greenhouse gas or energy base year.](#)

Cities and Counties Participating in The Beacon Award

28. Which cities and counties are participating in the Beacon Award?

A list of cities and counties that have been accepted as a Beacon Award program participant, as well as those that have received the Silver, Gold or Platinum Beacon Awards, is available at: www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward.

29. How can my agency be added to the list?

As soon as your agency's completed application is submitted and accepted, your agency will be added to the list of cities and counties participating in the Beacon Award program.

30. How can my agency connect with other Beacon Award participants?

CCAN offers several ways for cities and counties participating in the Beacon Award to share information, experiences and collaborate. Information about these opportunities will be available on the [Beacon Award webpage](#). They include the following:

- Online discussion forums on the Institute for Local Government's website for Beacon Award program participants.
- Webinars and/or conference calls for Beacon Award program participants.
- Workshops or informal discussions among Beacon Award participants at meetings of city and county officials.

Energy Efficiency Retrofit Savings and Promoting Community Energy Efficiency

The following explains the details of the agency facility energy savings and community energy efficiency and conservation promotion components of the Beacon Award.

Measuring Energy Savings in Agency Facilities

A. Overview

- Energy savings must be the result of an energy efficiency retrofit undertaken as a part of any of the following:
 - investor-owned or municipal utility energy efficiency programs;
 - programs funded by the California Energy Commission (CEC); or
 - efforts funded by the local agency or other sources.
- For retrofits undertaken using utility and/or CEC funding, agencies will use projected energy savings information associated with the retrofit activity.
- Agencies may select a base year from which to measure the energy savings, as long as the base year is not earlier than 2005.

For retrofit projects financed only with local agency funds or through an energy services company (and without utility and/or CEC funding), the local agency must provide the Beacon Award program with energy savings information based upon commonly accepted energy efficiency projection methodologies used by consultants, energy services companies or others.

For example a local agency may use the DEER (Database for Energy Efficiency Resources) cost and savings tool to calculate energy savings. DEER is a publicly accessible cost and savings projection tool sponsored CEC and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). [Click here to access DEER.](#)

B. Options for Agencies that Use Very Little Natural Gas in Agency Facilities

Two options are available to local agencies.

Option 1:

The agency may calculate energy savings individually for both electricity use and natural gas use in agency facilities based upon the criteria in A above; or

Option 2:

Agencies that use very little natural gas, such as those with few facilities and minimal natural gas powered equipment, may decide not to include natural gas usage and instead limit its energy savings information to electricity *only*.

- If the agency selects this option, it will be asked to demonstrate an increasing level of commitment to reduce natural gas use, commensurate with the three Beacon Award levels.
- This may include, for example, increasing efforts to retrofit or replace natural gas appliances or equipment with more energy efficient ones or adopt policies and procedures to operate the appliances or equipment more efficiently (if replacement is not feasible due to, for example, financial limitations).

C. Obtaining information for energy efficiency retrofit savings in agency facilities

- Local agencies may obtain information about energy savings associated with utility energy retrofit activities for agency facilities and operations in two ways.
 - They may request historical energy retrofit savings information from the utility in whose energy efficiency retrofit program they participated; or
 - They may use information the agency already has regarding energy savings from historical participation in utility or other efficiency retrofit programs, such as those sponsored by the California Energy Commission.
- The local agency may select a base year from which to calculate the energy efficiency savings, but no base year may be earlier than 2003. Contact your local energy utility for more information.
- Depending upon the size of the agency and its facilities, it may take at least four to six weeks for the utility to be able to provide the information.

Community Energy Efficiency Activities

A. Overview

- Unlike measuring energy savings in agency facilities, evaluating *community* energy efficiency actions for the Beacon Award's three levels uses a *qualitative*, not *quantitative* approach.
- Agencies will be asked to demonstrate increasing levels of activity for projects they have initiated or in which they participate that promote energy efficiency and conservation in the broader community.
- The three award levels do not prescribe any specific types of activities. This is because the levels of complexity and agency commitment will vary among different cities and counties depending upon their size, staff and financial resources, and level of existing community energy activities.

B. Award Level Criteria

Silver Award

- One community energy efficiency activity initiated by the local agency or in which the local agency participates.

Gold Award

- Two community energy efficiency activities initiated by the local agency or in which the local agency participates.
- The activities must reflect a higher level of commitment, complexity and agency involvement than the activity for the Silver Award.
- These activities must run for a duration of time or be ongoing as opposed to one time only events or activities. They may include a continuation or expansion of the activity undertaken to meet the Silver Award criteria.

Platinum Award

- Four community energy efficiency activities, two of which must be *initiated* by the local agency.
- The activities must reflect a significantly higher level of commitment, complexity and agency involvement than the activities for the Gold Award.
- These activities must run for a duration of time or be ongoing as opposed to one time only events or activities. They may include a continuation or expansion of activities undertaken to receive the Gold Award.

C. Examples of activities to promote energy efficiency and conservation in the community

The following examples illustrate the range of activities a local agency may use to promote energy efficiency and conservation in the community. They are not mandatory or exhaustive of what an agency may do. Local agencies are encouraged to undertake activities that reflect increasing levels commitment or difficulty for the individual agency. More examples of community energy efficiency and conservation outreach activities are available in the California Climate Action Network's Best Practices Framework at www.ca-ilg.org/climatepractices and www.ca-ilg.org/energyefficiency.

Examples of Silver Beacon Award Activities

- Including energy conservation information on agency's website.
- Organizing or participating in an energy fair to showcase energy efficient equipment and appliances for residents and businesses.
- Working with area schools to educate children about energy efficiency.
- Including an energy efficiency component in the agency's youth commission project activity.

Examples of Gold Beacon Award Activities

- Collaborating with utility to promote energy efficiency in homes and businesses.

- Offering energy audits for local businesses.
- Offering seminars to assist homeowners to retrofit homes to include energy efficiency features.
- Offering seminars for builders and architects to educate them about energy efficiency features in new homes.

Examples of Platinum Beacon Award Activities

- Adopting a green building ordinance that exceeds the state's energy efficiency standards.
- Working with owners of multi-family properties to install energy efficiency retrofits.
- Adopting an ordinance that encourages or requires energy audits at time of sale.
- Sponsoring home energy audit and efficiency retrofit programs.

Note: Adoption of policies or programs related to alternative or renewable energy, such as requiring or encouraging photovoltaic systems on new commercial or residential buildings, may satisfy the community energy activity criteria as long as it is part of a group of activities that emphasizes energy efficiency or conservation policies or programs.

Energy Use Information for Conducting Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories

The following provides information on how to obtain energy use information needed to prepare a greenhouse gas inventory. Remember, however, that energy use is just one component of a greenhouse gas inventory. Other elements include vehicle miles traveled, solid waste and waste and recycling, and other activities that produce greenhouse gas emissions.

A. Agency facilities and operations

- Local agencies may request energy use information from their utility(s) for natural gas and electricity to prepare a baseline (or subsequent) greenhouse gas inventory for agency facilities and operations.
- The year for which the information is requested should be the same as the baseline year or target year, as appropriate.
- The utilities will provide the actual electricity and natural gas usage for each agency facility. In addition, the usage data may be provided in equivalents of tons of greenhouse gas, using a conversion factor to reflect the mix of fuel sources for that year. In some cases, a conversion factor may be provided in lieu of calculated emissions. If an agency requests information for current year energy usage, it may not be available until the greenhouse gas equivalent conversion factors are calculated by the utility and verified by a third party.

B. Community as a whole

- Local agencies may request aggregated natural gas and electricity use information for the community as a whole from the utilities that provide electricity and natural gas service. Cities will request the data for the area within their jurisdictional boundaries. Counties will request the data for the area within the unincorporated part of the county.
- The information provided will be on an aggregated, community-wide basis. Due to privacy issues, the utilities are not able to provide information that violates confidentiality rules (such as energy use information for individuals, neighborhoods, businesses or groups of businesses).
- Depending upon the size of the community and the number of other cities and counties requesting information at the time, it may take four to six weeks for the utility to be able to provide the information requested.

C. Who to contact in your utility provider for energy use information?

Pacific Gas and Electric

See PG&E greenhouse gas data fact sheet at:

<http://www.pge.com/includes/docs/pdfs/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/incentivesbyindustry/>

[government/ghg_data_fact_sheet.pdf](#). The fact sheet includes guidance on requesting data, including how to request energy data.

Southern California Edison

Contact your Local Government Partnership Program Manager, Account Representative or Local Public Affairs Region Manager

Southern California Gas

Contact your Local Government Partnership Program Manager, Account Representative or Local Public Affairs Region Manager

San Diego Gas and Electric

Contact your Local Government Partnership Program Manager, Account Representative or Local Public Affairs Region Manager

Municipal gas or electric utilities

Contact the individual utility that provides electricity or gas service for your local agency facilities and community.

More Information Available

If the Beacon Award Procedures and Guidelines don't answer your question, please contact us at BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org or 916-658-8202.