

Local Government Energy Efficiency

Best Practices

ENERGY PLANNING

City of West Covina

Location: San Gabriel Valley, Los Angeles County

Population: 112,000

SUMMARY

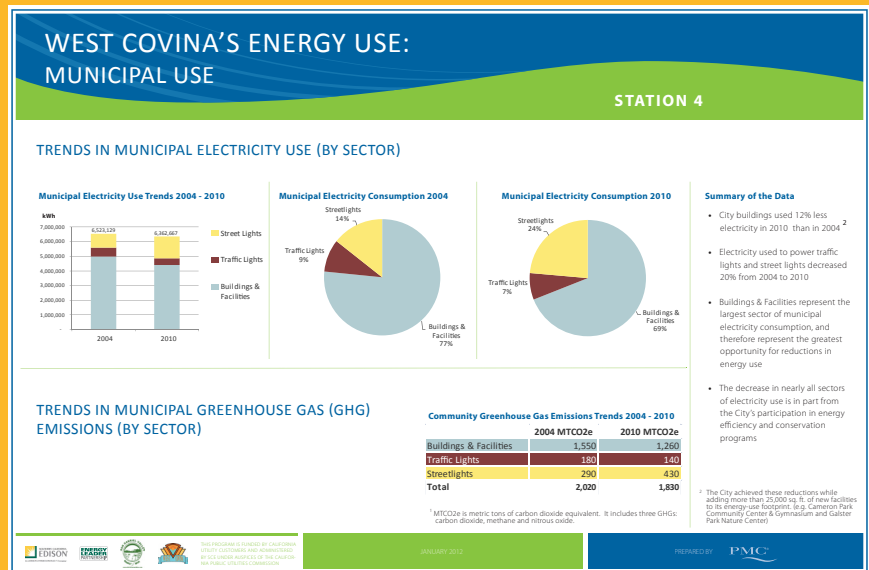
The City of West Covina has assumed a leadership role dedicated to reaching sustainable conservation goals to reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions within the community.

The City has invested precious dollars in order to achieve significant energy savings, energy planning, and demand side management goals.

The City crafted an Energy Action Plan (EAP) that would establish similar goals for the entire community. The purpose of the EAP is to guide the City toward attainable conservation goals that will result in the implementation of policies, strategies, and actions that are both cost effective and environmentally sound.

Adopted by City Council on September 6, 2011, the initial goals of West Covina's EAP have now become implemented — resulting in the City becoming the first jurisdiction to achieve "Platinum" energy-conservation status in Southern California Edison's Energy Leader Partnership Program.

West Covina Energy Action Plan Saves Energy & Money



“West Covina’s investment in energy efficiency projects and programs is a great example of how local government can reduce the cost of doing business and decrease energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions that are generated in our community. By improving energy efficiency, dollars not spent on energy bills are now going towards new investments (public safety, parks, streets, etc.) in our community that our residents rely on.”

*-- Former West Covina Mayor
Steve Herfert*

Energy Action Plan

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Energy Savings — Achieved energy savings of approximately 22% in municipal facilities (1,568,000 kWh) and 19% in community-wide consumption (91 million kWh) since 2004.
- Program-related efficiency incentives received to date: over \$240,000.
- Annual cost savings achieved at city facilities to date: over \$235,100.
- City's costs to date: no cost to City, except for administrative staff salaries.
- Annual Greenhouse Gas reductions achieved at city facilities to date: over 1,081 metric tons.
- Energy Planning — Strategized for long-term energy management needs and developed a road map for achieving energy reduction goals.
- Demand Side Management — Enrolled city facilities in all available programs to reduce power when energy supplies are low, to earn incentives and to save on energy costs.
- Project Funding Conservation — Completed original conservation goals awarded through DOE's Energy Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program early.
- Local Oversight — All of West Covina's conservation goals are reviewed by, and receive support from, San Gabriel Valley Energy Watch, Southern California Edison, and San Gabriel Valley COG.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The current economic climate has resulted in a need for flexibility in the conservation/ efficiency strategies being developed by local governments. Because the operational expenses of established departments (or businesses) and new departments (or businesses) are not equal, their cost to perform the desired improvements will differ as well.
- West Covina has developed an alternate strategy, one that is focused instead on encouraging voluntary participation in those areas of conservation most likely to be affordable and cost-effective to their participants.
- Those categories of voluntary participation are:
 1. Conservation: "Unplug it!" (Or consider reducing your hours of operation.)
 2. Efficiency: "Replace it!" (Especially if it's going to break down anyway.)
 3. Green: "Grow!" (Or try standing still using either "Conservation" or "Efficiency" efforts.)
- Before recommending this flexibility strategy to others, the City experimented on its own departments. That test proved to be highly successful, at all city facilities.

THE REST OF THE STORY

Beginning in 1993, the City of West Covina performed multiple energy efficiency projects through its Capital Improvement Program (CIP), using a variety of funding mechanisms. Through 2009, that work resulted in energy savings of more than twelve million kilowatt hours and cost savings in excess of \$1,300,000.

Since 2006, the City has participated in the San Gabriel Valley Energy Wise partnership (SGVEW); a coalition of cities and counties supported by Southern California Edison (SCE), and by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG).

In February 2012, the City of West Covina was awarded Platinum Level status in SCE's Local Government Energy Leader Partnership (ELP) program. Platinum status is the highest of four possible levels, and provides future energy efficiency projects and efforts with the highest level of financial rebates, technical research and community outreach support.

Prior to that recognition, in September 2011, West Covina's City Council adopted an Energy Action Plan with goals listed that are now being implemented through the CIP, which includes line items for each of the identified municipal projects and conservation efforts. > [more...](#)

Energy Planning

continued from page 2 > The Public Works Director/ City Engineer will monitor the ongoing progress of the EAP program and the individual projects.

The purpose of the EAP is to guide the City toward attainable conservation goals that will continue to significantly reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions within the community.

The summary goals of that guide include:

- Five percent of local businesses participate in utility energy efficiency programs no later than 2014.
- Fifteen percent of local homeowners participate in utility energy efficiency programs no later than 2013.
- Energy use at City facilities is reduced by at least 30% by 2012 (1994 baseline).

And to promote, support, and implement cost-effective, realistic energy efficiency and conservation programs, the City has adopted policy goals that now include:

- Surpassing the State energy efficiency standards for proposed and existing municipal facilities.
- Providing on-line guidance to homeowners and builders to improve compliance with new Title 24 energy requirements.
- Developing an ordinance to encourage energy efficiency upgrades in existing buildings.
- Promoting energy and water conservation design features in all major renovation/development projects.
- Implementing other energy conservation programs and measures that may prove beneficial to West Covina's economy and environment.

To fund these projects, the City will continue to explore creating a revolving loan fund capable of funding residential and small business efficiency improvements; creating opportunities to purchase and distribute efficiency products in bulk; investigating third party financing; studying revenue bond opportunities; and pursuing all available subsidies, rebates and grants.

GAINING POLITICAL SUPPORT

The City of West Covina performed all conservation program design and administration work using Senior Building Inspector trained staff — which resulted in the early elimination of all non-viable, least cost-effective, conservation projects.

And at an almost constant ratio of “2 out of 10” (meaning that 8 projects failed, before 2 were accepted), the ensuing recommendations for this program were accepted by all of the program's contributing agencies and stakeholders, with only minimal changes required.

Cost-effectiveness was the determining constant in all cases, and once each project was successfully proofed by that standard (to Building Inspector satisfaction), all of the conservation efforts received the full support and encouragement of the West Covina City Council — without reservation.

LEARN MORE

The **San Gabriel Valley Energy Wise Partnership** brings resources and practical assistance to local communities to increase energy efficiency & conservation: www.sgvenergywise.org

To download a copy of **West Covina's Plan**, go to the City's website and search for Energy Action Plan: www.westcovina.org

Southern California Edison's programs for businesses, including local governments, are available at: <http://www.sce.com/business/ems>

The **San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments:** www.sgvocog.org



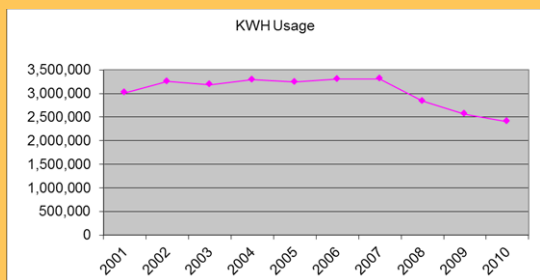
Local Government BEST PRACTICES

SIMILAR PROGRAMS

■ The primary focus of the San Diego Association of Government's **Energy Roadmap Program** is to provide assistance to its 16 member agencies that do not have their own local government partnerships with SDG&E. SANDAG works with each city to develop a customized, comprehensive Energy Roadmap that addresses saving energy in city operations, and saving energy in the community.

■ San Mateo County Energy Watch partnership developed the **Regionally Integrated Climate Action Planning Suite** to save the cities in San Mateo County the costs for developing CAPs by creating a template integrating the plan document, GHG emission reduction measures, the business-as-usual forecast, and tracking for future years via a software tool.

Energy Use of West Covina Building with Turbocor Chiller (installed 2007)



For more information about this case study: Patrick Stoner, Statewide Local Government Energy Efficiency Best Practices Coordinator, pstoner@lgc.org

Funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by California's investor owned utilities under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.

Energy Planning

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

■ **Energy Upgrade California** is a one-stop-shop for home improvement projects that lower energy use, conserve water and natural resources. Information is available for all 58 counties in California.

www.energyupgradeca.org/overview

■ The **California Energy Commission** and other state agencies can help California's cities, counties, and regional planning organizations deal with energy issues.

www.energy.ca.gov/localgovernment/index.html

■ **ENERGY STAR** is a joint program of the US EPA and the US DOE helping to save money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices.

www.energystar.gov/

■ The ARRA-funded **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program** empowers local communities to make strategic investments to meet the nation's long-term goals for energy independence and leadership on climate change.

www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/eecbg.html

■ **Investor owned utilities** offer incentives and other assistance to local governments.

PG&E: www.pge.com/sustainablecommunities

SDG&E: www.sdge.com/save-money/solutions-your-business/energy-savings-solutions

Southern CA Edison: www.sce.com/business/ems/governmentandinstitutional/default.htm

Southern CA Gas: www.socalgas.com/for-your-business/rebates/industry/government.shtml

■ Check with your **municipal utility** for similar programs.