

# Local Government Energy Efficiency

## Best Practices

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**City of San Diego**  
North Park Business Improvement District  
Businesses: 500

#### SUMMARY

In October 2010, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) joined forces with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), the City of San Diego and North Park Main Street, a business improvement district (BID\*) in the city that serves 500 members.

The partners launched a Small Business Energy Makeover program, targeting the BID's many small business members, to boost energy efficiency and achieve cost savings for them while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The North Park initiative was one of several such initiatives across the state targeting small business. A reduction of 20 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e could be achieved in California if existing buildings were made more energy efficient.

Additionally, SDG&E committed to use the North Park makeover approach in other cities within its service territory.

\* A BID is a public/private partnership that performs a variety of services to improve the image of its city and promote individual business districts. It can also carry out economic development services by working to attract, retain and expand businesses.

## North Park Main Street Small Business Energy Makeover



#### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Inspired by “Extreme Makeover” television series
- Targeted small businesses
  - The most difficult segment of commercial sector to reach
  - Large energy costs with great potential for energy and cost reductions
- More than 100 businesses participated in assessments and 68 received energy makeovers
- Typical upgrades included HVAC tune-ups, refrigerator unit coil cleanings, hot water line insulations, compact fluorescent light bulb retrofits, LED exit sign replacement and a number of other lighting and water saving measures
- SDG&E invested \$130,713 in the program at no cost to customers
- Total annual energy savings: 493,282 kWh
- Total annual customer cost savings: \$78,000
- Spawned similar programs facilitated by SDG&E with the National City Chamber of Commerce, the Escondido Downtown Business Association and other similar business improvement districts and local chambers.

# Small Business Energy Makeover

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Partnering with business improvement districts helped advance program goals faster and more efficiently. North Park Main Street has strong relationships with its members and was able to get the word out quickly and encourage higher participation rates.
- Each business improvement district is different. North Park Main Street knew its neighborhood's needs, cultures and business mix. It was also able to ensure that SDG&E's programs were filling those needs and presented or offered in a way that would not inconvenience the restaurants, art galleries and other businesses clustered in their neighborhood.
- Involving elected officials raises the program's visibility and enhances its credibility. The mayor, a council-member and county supervisor attended the program's launch and helped deliver its message of energy efficiency for small businesses.
- By clustering small businesses by the hundreds, the program achieves efficiencies for utilities as well. SDG&E was able to use its program resources more efficiently, reaching larger numbers and making a bigger impact in a much shorter span of time.
- The partnership drove economic benefits for the neighborhood's businesses as hundreds of businesses achieved monthly cost savings. These savings came at a time when many small businesses were looking to stretch their dollar.
- Through television and daily newspaper coverage of the press conference that launched the program, its messages could be communicated to a much broader audience, resulting in greater impact.

## THE REST OF THE STORY

Drawing on the luster of the “Extreme Makeover” reality TV series, the North Park Small Business Energy Makeover was designed to inspire and engage small businesses to make energy upgrades. The program was a group effort that quickly matched SDG&E's efficiency resources with the BID's small businesses, helping business owners in a challenging economy to reduce energy consumption and save money, while promoting resource efficiency, economic development and climate protection for the local government partner, the City of San Diego.

North Park Main Street, with the support of City government and elected officials, successfully reached out, educated and encouraged its member business owners to sign-up for the energy efficiency check-ups and/or assessments. SDG&E supported the process by providing clear information about its energy conserving measures, rebates, and financing incentives.

SDG&E's contractors were sent to assess the facilities of participating businesses and identify which retrofits

*“This is a great, easy and, frankly, a fairly low cost way to really make large investments back into small business districts.”*

*- Todd Gloria, San Diego City Council Member, District 3*

would be beneficial to their bottom line as well as their environmental footprint.

Typical project upgrades included HVAC tune-ups, refrigerator unit coil cleanings, hot water line insulations, compact fluorescent light bulb retrofits, LED exit sign replacement and a number of other lighting and water saving measures.

Cirello Gallery, a fine art gallery owned by Matthew Cirello, had 50 new compact fluorescent lights installed. Cirello reported being  [> more...](#)

## Small Business Energy Makeover

... continued from page 2 > very happy with how the new lighting lit his displays and surprised to find they reduced the temperature in the gallery allowing him to save on summer air conditioning costs. The improved energy efficiency also aligned with the gallery's commitment to sustainability in its products as well as its operations.

SDG&E acquired new small business customers for its energy efficiency programs and reduced load on its system by 493,282 kWh per year thanks to the 68 small businesses that increased their efficiency.

A press event to launch the program and resulting media coverage also raised greater awareness of its energy efficiency messages for small businesses. In addition to the North Park BID leadership and member companies, the event was attended by SDG&E, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, councilman for District 3, Todd Gloria, and County Supervisor Ron Roberts, as well as officials from the Air Resources Board.

The program was approached as a model for the rest of San Diego to follow and became one of the most successful such initiatives in the state.

The Small Business Energy Makeovers produced savings for participating small businesses that they could benefit from month after month on their gas and electric bill. In all, the North Park Main Street members saved more than \$78,000 which they were able to reinvest in strengthening their businesses and local economy.

*“Putting this effort toward multiple businesses, 100 businesses at a time, rather than one, is the key to success.”*

*–Ron Roberts, San Diego County Board of Supervisors, California Air Resources Board*

*“We’ve already noticed a big difference in the temperature with these lights. We used to have to run our AC because the halogens would get so hot, now it’s about 10 degrees cooler.”*

*– John Gibbons, permanent artist, Cirello Gallery*



*Fluorescent bulbs at the Cirello Gallery in North Park have taken the place of older and inefficient incandescent lighting, reducing energy use dramatically.*

### LEARN MORE

Discover all of the ways your business can save money and operate more efficiently through a partnership with SDG&E:

[www.sdge.com/our-commitment/energy-efficiency-partnership-programs/local-government-partnerships](http://www.sdge.com/our-commitment/energy-efficiency-partnership-programs/local-government-partnerships)

Learn how to get a small business energy makeover program off the ground, who to get involved and other useful tips from successful programs at:

[CoolCalifornia.org](http://CoolCalifornia.org)

Step-by-step process for how to conduct a **Small Business Energy and Water Makeover**:

[www.coolcalifornia.org/sites/coolcalifornia/files/EnergyMakeoverChart10-10.pdf](http://www.coolcalifornia.org/sites/coolcalifornia/files/EnergyMakeoverChart10-10.pdf)

**North Park Main Street:**

[www.northparkmainstreet.com](http://www.northparkmainstreet.com)

# Local Government BEST PRACTICES

## SIMILAR PROGRAMS

### ■ Fresno Energy Watch Program-

A partnership between Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the city and the county of Fresno, and Richard Heath and Associates, Inc. (RHA) who work together to provide energy efficiency upgrades at no cost to eligible businesses, municipal buildings and non-profit organizations.

[www.energywatchinfo.com](http://www.energywatchinfo.com)

### ■ Sacramento Small Business Energy and Water Makeover Project:

A partnership between the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Oak Park Business Improvement District, Stockton Boulevard Partners, City Greenwise Program and CoolCalifornia.org, to help businesses understand their energy and water usage and implement ways to reduce it. During the makeover week, representatives from SMUD went door-to-door to 150 businesses to conduct energy and water efficiency checkups, which led to 60 energy and 29 water upgrades.

[swww.mud.org/en/business/save-energy/success-stories.htm](http://swww.mud.org/en/business/save-energy/success-stories.htm)

### ■ Lennox Community Energy Makeover-

Southern California Edison, West Basin Water District and the Golden State Water Company partnered to install energy and water conservation resources into more than 90 businesses, showing that minor improvements can improve their carbon footprint and benefit their bottom line.

To watch a clip from the press conference:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmkfD\\_6JYVg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmkfD_6JYVg)

For more information about this case study:  
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Funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by California's investor owned utilities under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.

## Community Outreach

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

■ **CoolCalifornia.org**- The website provides quick resources as well as easy-to-use and reliable tools for all of California's small businesses to help them save money and reduce their impact on the climate.

[www.coolcalifornia.org/local-government](http://www.coolcalifornia.org/local-government)

■ **ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability** offers a suite of resources to aid local governments in implementing energy efficiency measures and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[www.californiaseec.org](http://www.californiaseec.org)

■ **The Institute for Local Government's Climate Change Program** provides resources, information, and recognition to help local agencies reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy.

[www.ca-ilg.org/ClimateChange](http://www.ca-ilg.org/ClimateChange)

■ **The Local Government Commission** provides many free resources to assist local governments in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use including newsletters and publications, fact sheets, model projects, and articles.

[www.lgc.org/SEEC](http://www.lgc.org/SEEC)

**Investor owned utilities** offer incentives and other assistance to businesses.

**PG&E:** [www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com)

**SDG&E:** [www.sdge.com](http://www.sdge.com)

**Southern CA Edison:** [www.sce.com](http://www.sce.com)

**Southern CA Gas:** [www.socalgas.com](http://www.socalgas.com)

Check with your municipal utility for similar programs.