

**PROUD
PARTICIPANT**



Local Leadership Toward
Solving Climate Change

Beacon Award Participant Guide: How to Demonstrate Progress and Receive Interim Recognition

Introduction

Congratulations on your agency's participation in the Beacon Award: Local Leadership Toward Solving Climate Change. The Institute for Local Government applauds your agency's leadership and commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, saving energy and promoting sustainability policies and programs!

We want to provide guidance on:

- How the Institute Can Help Your City or County Inform Your Community About Your Participation & Accomplishments
- Demonstrating Progress As Your Agency Works Toward Reaching A Beacon Award Level
- Accomplishments Eligible for Receiving Interim Recognition
- Recognition Opportunities for Interim Accomplishments
- Achieving a Silver, Gold or Platinum Beacon Award

We're Here to Help!

Contact ILG staff if you have any questions, would like to discuss an aspect of the guide, start the process toward receiving interim recognition or achieving an award level.

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How the Institute Can Help Your Agency Inform Your Community About Its Participation

The Institute can help your agency let its residents and businesses know about its participation in the Beacon Award program. This is a great way to demonstrate to the community your agency's leadership and commitment to save money, resources, and promote sustainability.

The Institute provides the following options to Beacon Award program participants:

- Sample press release about participating in the Beacon Award program you can send to local media.
 - Distribution assistance to you or your agency Public Information Officer provided by ILG Communications & Development Director Kelly Plag (kplag@ca-ilg.org).
- Cross-promotion using the ILG and your agency's Facebook pages highlighting your agency's sustainability leadership and accomplishments.
- Prominent presence on the Beacon Award website, including an individual participant profile page.
- Use of a "Proud Participant" Beacon Award logo you can add to your agency's website, Facebook page, or other places or websites about your community.
 - We will provide you with your participant profile URL and the Beacon Award Proud Participant logo in a digital form for inclusion on your website.
- "Proud Participant" window decal for use at agency facilities identifying your agency as a proud participant in the Beacon Award program.
- Opportunity to highlight agency elected officials and staff through video or other means. (See www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Testimonials for examples).
 - ILG staff will be seeking out opportunities to meet with your agency elected officials and staff to capture video content for inclusion on your participant profile and other areas of the ILG website.
 - Video content can be easily embedded onto your agency website.

We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities, many of which occur at the time of acceptance into the program. Contact ILG staff and let us know how we can help!

Demonstrating Progress As Your Agency Works Toward Reaching A Beacon Award Level

Achieving a silver, gold or platinum Beacon Award is a journey that takes time and involves different activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy. In order to demonstrate your agency's efforts toward reaching a Beacon Award level of recognition, we ask that your agency provide the Institute with periodic information about your activities.

- ILG staff will check in with you via email regarding completion of inventories and plans.
 - If there are any changes in anticipated completion dates as indicated on application form, please send an update to BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org.
- We want to track and share your agency's progress toward completing activities in each of the ten Sustainability and Climate Change Best Practice Areas¹. Throughout the course of the Beacon Award program, participating agencies must complete activities in each of the ten [Best Practice Areas](#): one activity to achieve the silver Beacon Award level, two for the gold Beacon Award level, and three for the platinum Beacon Award level. Please complete our survey and provide brief descriptions of **up to six activities that are ongoing or that your agency has completed** in each of the Best Practice Areas and would like to highlight and apply towards the achievement of a Beacon Award level.
 - The survey is available [online](#), as a [fillable .pdf](#), or as a [Word document](#).
 - This survey will be conducted approximately every six months. Activity information will be shared on your agency participant profile.
 - If you haven't completed any activities in a particular Best Practice Area, that's ok. This is strictly for tracking purposes and to highlight activities to share with other communities. Not completing an activity in a particular best practice area won't detract from your agency's achievements in other areas.
 - Visit www.ca-ilg.org/ClimatePractices to view the Best Practices Framework.
 - Please remember that activities included in the framework are examples of what local agencies might consider, based upon their individual circumstances and resources. Activities are not restricted to those specified in the framework and credit for activities can be applied retroactively.

¹ The ten Best Practice Areas are: Energy Efficiency & Conservation, Water and Wastewater Systems, Green Building, Waste Reduction & Recycling, Climate-Friendly Purchasing, Renewable Energy & Low Carbon Fuels, Efficiency Transportation, Land Use & Community Design, Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emissions, Promoting Community and Individual Action.

Accomplishments Eligible for Receiving Interim Recognition

As Beacon Award program participants work towards reaching one of the three award levels, we want to celebrate their interim accomplishments. Participants can receive interim recognition in three areas.

1. Activities in the Climate Action and Sustainability Best Practice Areas

If your agency is in process of or has completed policies, programs or projects in each of the ten best practices areas, it may be eligible to receive interim recognition for its accomplishments. For example, Beacon Award requirements include one activity in each best practice area for a Silver Award and two activities in each area for a Gold Award.

Key steps to consider for receiving interim recognition for best practice area activities include:

- Review Beacon Award Guidelines (www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines) for more information about the Best Practices criteria for each award level.
- Review the ten Best Practice areas and the Best Practices Framework (www.ca-ilg.org/ClimatePractices) to identify activities in each area your agency may have already completed or have in process.
 - Let us know what you've accomplished.
 - Even if your agency is not yet ready to receive interim recognition, your agency's activities and best practices may be highlighted as a case story on the Institute's Sustainable Communities website.
 - Visit www.ca-ilg.org/climateactionstory to submit your story or email ILG staff at BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org to set up a telephone interview.

2. Energy Efficiency Savings in Agency Facilities

If you think your agency has saved energy in agency facilities by 5, 10 or 20 percent as a result of energy efficiency retrofit activities, it may be eligible for interim recognition. Details about calculating energy savings in agency facilities are available at: www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines#31. Contact ILG staff at BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org to submit data for verification or to ask any questions.

3. Greenhouse Gas Reductions in Agency Facilities

If you think your agency has reduced greenhouse gas emissions in agency facilities by 5, 10 or 20 percent, it may be eligible for interim recognition. Details about accepted methodologies and base year are available at: www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines#25. Contact ILG staff at BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org to submit data for verification or to ask any questions.

Recognition Opportunities for Interim Accomplishments

As Beacon Award program participants achieve interim recognition, we want to celebrate their interim accomplishments. Recognition opportunities include:

- News release to your local media.
 - We will provide you with a press release template for your use.
 - ILG Communications & Development Director Kelly Plag (kplag@ca-ilg.org) is available to provide distribution assistance to you or your agency Public Information Officer.
- Cross-promotion using the ILG and your agency's Facebook pages highlighting your agency's sustainability leadership and accomplishments.
- Recognition associated with League, CSAC and other events and publications.
 - Presence at the ILG booth.
 - Planned sessions to bring together participants for networking, information sharing and recognition.
- A certificate of accomplishment and recognition at your board of supervisors or city council meeting if feasible.
 - Certificates of accomplishment will also be provided in a digital format for use on your agency's website.
- Video interviews with your agency's elected officials and staff posted on the Institute's website and Facebook page about the agency's accomplishments.
 - ILG staff will be seeking out opportunities to meet with your agency elected officials and staff to capture video content for inclusion on your participant profile and other areas of the ILG website.
 - Video content can be easily embedded onto your agency website.

Achieving a Silver, Gold or Platinum Beacon Award

If you think your agency has met all of the criteria for achievement of a Silver, Gold, or Platinum Beacon Award, it may be eligible to receive an award. Visit www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/Guidelines#5 to review criteria.

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 [link] 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 via email to the Beacon Award program staff at BeaconAward@ca-ilg.org.

Recognition Opportunities for Achieving a Silver, Gold or Platinum Beacon Award

Once your agency has officially reached one or more Beacon Award levels, we will celebrate that significant accomplishment. The menu of options include those items listed offered for celebrating interim accomplishments, as well as options that offer greater local and statewide visibility. These may include local and statewide press events, special recognition at League and CSAC events designed to highlight your agency's accomplishments, presentations at meetings of boards of supervisors or city councils, enhanced presence on the Institute's website, and a plaque to display at the agency facilities.