



Access the funds for energy efficiency projects

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Ultimately, you want an energy efficiency plan for your business - understanding it makes good business sense to lower your energy consumption, to save money, improve your bottom line and protect the environment in the process. You followed the preliminary steps of benchmarking to see how your building compares with similar buildings in your area. You've also had an energy audit to get a handle on what upgrades your building needs.

After looking at the laundry list of inefficient equipment and building systems that need improvements and the associated costs, you start to conceptualize the various ways to shuffle the budget to find capital for these improvements and make it work!

Becoming energy efficient gives businesses the opportunity to reduce costs and in some cases, actually enhance the level of services that they provide to clients in terms of putting in the right level of lighting, providing the right temperature controls and comfort in various areas of the building. It's beneficial because one can control costs without diminishing the levels of service.

Even in a weak economy, the sooner improvements are made, the sooner savings will add up. The cost of waiting is enormous. It's like the cost of waiting to enter the PC age and waiting for the greatest, most sophisticated computer to come on the market. Over that period of time you are waiting - in the case of energy efficiency - there are substantial savings that your business is losing. When assessing options for investing in energy efficiency, keep in mind these important factors to help ensure a complete assessment of the cost effectiveness:

- * Consider long term and think about the cost and payback that will accrue over the complete life cycle of systems or equipment.
- * Compare the cost of continuing with "business as usual" with no changes versus energy efficiency investments.
- * Consider your public image - strong leadership in energy efficiency demonstrating your commitment to sustainability, conserving energy and saving the environment.

Many organizations see cash flow as a major obstacle to energy efficiency projects especially in tough economic times. The good news is there are multiple resources. For example, Con Edison, offers a variety of incentive programs - Con Edison's Green Team has many programs that can help reduce the cost of energy, like the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Energy Efficiency Program (www.ConEd.com/energysavings).

The C&I program offers a number of financing incentives through rebates and other means to promote energy efficiency retrofits and installations. The incentives typically cover standard energy efficiency equipment for lighting and lighting controls, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), furnace, boilers and other gas equipment, motors, variable frequency drive (VFDs), and DDC/controls. These programs may also allow for customized measures. The Con Edison Green Team C&I program, for example, has a custom program that may include the installation of

chillers/and or refrigeration system upgrades, industrial improvements, compressed air systems and other innovative measures not included on the standard rebates equipment list.

In most cases, financing can be structured so that the projects can be repaid from energy savings, negating the need for upfront capital. Check with your utility to see what opportunities are available. A good energy service company can guide your organization, offering special financing while the government provides tax credits and low interest loans for energy efficiency projects.

For the N.Y. metro area and Westchester County, contact the Con Edison Green Team and the C&I Energy Efficiency Program to assist with your energy efficiency needs. Visit conEd.com/energysavings or call 1-877-797-6347.

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