



Question of the Month: Concerning rebates: Why leave the money on the table? - by Joseph Lecce

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For all the building owners, real estate developers, contractors, facility managers, property managers and individual businesses, if performing a construction project or maintenance that can reduce energy or replace older equipment with new higher efficient equipment, there are many opportunities for obtaining monetary rebates from the local utility companies.

Con-Ed Energy Efficiency & Demand Management has been sponsoring a widespread commercial & industrial, residential, and multi-use building rebate program that offers monetary incentives for energy reduction measures, maintenance, and equipment replacements. With the big crunch on available electrical power and gas in the New York City and the Westchester area, there are many opportunities to take advantage of these rebates. The substantial incentive rebates are typically available for large peak power demand reductions and reduction of natural gas usage within facilities. Such items that offer substantial rebates include chiller replacements, battery storage systems, boiler replacements, VFD's and high efficiency motors, heat pump replacements and new installations, LED lighting, insulations for walls and piping, steam trap maintenance and other custom incentives as approved by the program. However, any system upgrade or maintenance can potentially qualify for rebates regardless of the size or cost of the project if energy reduction is evident.

Typically, every calendar year the rebate programs do change and the rebates values may vary also. The program also focuses on additional rebates in select geographic areas of the boroughs to incentivize these locations to install energy efficient systems and help reduce peak demands on the utility systems.

The three primary rebate incentive programs that currently exist are the Extended Life Program, the Prescriptive Program, and the Custom Program. The extended life program requires full pre-demolition inspections of the equipment or systems and requires past maintenance records. The Prescriptive program allows rebates for equipment that is utilized which is better than code minimum requirements. The Custom program is typically used when system concept changes take place in

the construction such as converting from DX Air Conditioning units with hot water coils to new heat pump units and a comparative analysis is performed to determine the energy savings and differentials between the old and proposed new systems.

Lecce Engineering is an approved Con-Ed Participating Contractor and has been obtaining monetary rebates via the Con-Ed rebate program for our clients and customers for the past year. With a strong partnership with the Con-Ed Energy Rebate team, we have successfully obtained over \$200,000 for various types of projects such as chillers, boilers, heat pumps, LED lighting and VFD's.

From our experience, the secret to success on these projects is early participation of the participating contractor at the early stages of design development. We as the participating contractor should be engaged in the schematic phase of the project so we can ascertain the potential rebates available based on the proposed project upgrades. It also allows for us to perform pre-demolition inspections of the equipment so the Extended Life Program can be utilized, which typically generates more rebate money than the prescriptive program. In addition, the amount of money that may be available via the rebate program may sway the system equipment selection decisions and which systems should be considered. By maximizing the potential rebates, the overall payback of the systems will ultimately be reduced.

Most rebate projects to date that we have completed have been directly designed by Lecce Engineering so we have had the advantage of being in the process early and maximizing our rebates. However, we have some late game projects that had already started the demolition process and construction process, and this makes it more difficult to qualify for the rebates. In most cases, the late process can result in reducing the maximum rebate monies to be obtained. We have learned that the late game applications typically do not pan out as good as the early submission ones.

So if a project you are considering is upcoming, and you have intentions of obtaining rebates monies, the best approach is to contact us as early as possible when starting your project.

From our experience, the projects are required to be done and paid for, so why not take advantage of the rebate programs. If properly applied for thru the rebate programs and approved, the money will be available if the system upgrades are qualified, so, "Don't Leave the Money on the Table," call Lecce Engineering to pursue your future rebates.

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