
Department of Energy

Puget Sound Communities Promote Energy Efficiency

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Four organizations on Washington state's Kitsap Peninsula are joining forces to improve their energy efficiency. Led by the City of Bremerton, the largest participant city by population and energy needs, the four will hire an expert consultant to find and document ways to save energy in big ways and small.

Pat Coxon, Wastewater Division manager for the city, says the project is still getting started, but reductions in every part of its resource use are on the table. He says the grant was a well-timed opportunity for Bremerton to meet energy efficiency goals it was already pursuing.

"We just finished an energy plan for the city and highlighted a few areas within the city that need to be looked at more in-depth," Pat says. "[When] this grant opportunity came along, we figured it was good timing for us, so we pursued it."

Using a grant funded by the Recovery Act, Bremerton, along with the cities of Poulsbo, Bainbridge Island and the Port of Bremerton plan to hire a shared resource conservation manager, an expert who helps large organizations identify opportunities

to reduce wasted energy and other resources. This allows the organizations to put energy-efficiency savings into areas that need revenue, such as public safety. In the case of municipal utilities, an RCM can also save money in residents' energy bills.

RCM programs have already been successful around the state, with support from Washington State University's Energy Program. Typical savings with an RCM range from 5 to 10 percent of costs annually, and 8 to 10 percent would not be unusual. In the Olympia School District, an RCM saved \$200,000 in each of the first two years, far outpacing the cost of the program.

Pat praises the program for providing an opportunity Bremerton couldn't pursue on its own. Because the project is in its infancy, he is not sure how much energy savings or financial savings Bremerton is anticipating. However, the city and its partners are already pursuing smaller energy efficiency projects, such as installing more efficient lamps in a city parking garage. The RCM is expected to bolster those efforts and perhaps free funding for environmentally conscious improvements like alternative-fuel city vehicles.

What does this project do?

Identifies wasted energy

Frees up money for cash strapped programs in the area.

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