

Program Helps Businesses Reduce Energy, Save Money

Energy Upgrade California™ in Sonoma County is part of a new statewide program that packages rebates, incentives, and financing together into a “one-stop shop” to help businesses and homeowners in Santa Rosa and throughout the county reduce energy use and lower utility bills. The program supports a “whole-building” approach to saving energy because it takes more than switching out light bulbs to achieve maximum efficiency and savings.

Energy Upgrade in Sonoma County guides and assists commercial property owners and building managers through the process of evaluating opportunities for water conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable generation. Approaching your building as a complete system means considering how HVAC, lighting, insulation, cool roof, water, and other systems can work together most effectively to reduce your energy use and help lower your utility bills.

Tax deductions ranging from \$0.60 to \$1.80 per square foot and utility rebates are available right now for owners of both new and existing buildings who upgrade interior lighting, building "envelope," heating, cooling, ventilation, or hot water systems to reduce the building's total energy.

Energy Upgrade also connects you to commercial project financing options, including the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program. SCEIP can finance energy efficiency, water efficiency, and renewable energy improvements through a voluntary assessment, known as Property Assessed Clean Energy or PACE financing. These assessments are attached to the property, not the owner, and are paid back through the property tax system over time. SCEIP is a partner in the Energy Upgrade California program in Sonoma County.

The business case for energy efficiency

What is the business case for pursuing energy efficiency right now? Consider the following:

- Lower up-front investment – Energy Upgrade lowers the cost of investing in energy efficiency upgrades because rebates and incentives make your improvements more affordable.

- Lower operating costs – Reducing your building energy use can potentially make a big difference in monthly utility bills, savings that ultimately pay back on your investment. Simple energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings, such as insulating window films, yield \$3 in savings on average for every \$1 invested.
- Increased property value – Energy efficient buildings retain higher real estate value, commanding higher rents (6-7%) and maintaining higher occupancy rates than less efficient buildings.
- Reduced carbon footprint – Improving your building’s energy efficiency is a key way to green your business and directly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, demonstrating your business’ compliance with AB32.
- Building energy rating boost – Turn your compliance with AB1103 (the law that requires nonresidential building owners or operators to disclose Energy Star Portfolio Manager benchmarking data and ratings to prospective buyers, lessees, or lenders, similar to a “miles per gallon” rating) into a business asset.
- Improved indoor air quality – Proper ventilation and non-toxic materials creates a healthier environment for your employees and customers.
- Local economic stimulation – Your energy efficiency project will create jobs and support local businesses!

Another opportunity to green your business

Extend your company’s sustainability efforts even further by getting on board with the Energy Upgrade Employee Outreach Program, which offers employers tools to educate your employees about energy efficiency services and benefits for their own homes. Up to \$4,000 in residential rebates are available now for home energy upgrades, providing homeowners with as much as 40 percent in energy savings on their utility bills. As of July 1, 2011, all Sonoma County residents are eligible for up to a 75 percent rebate on the cost of a Home Energy Analysis that includes a California Home Energy Rating System score (known as a HERS II Rating).

Joining the Employee Outreach Program also provides your business with marketing opportunities and community recognition for supporting your employees’ participation in the residential Energy Upgrade program.

Best of all, residential energy efficiency projects through Energy Upgrade are performed by contactors who are certified by the Building Performance Institute (BPI), have met all program requirements, and are part of an ongoing quality assurance program to ensure consumer

protection. Making energy efficiency improvements to your commercial property and helping your employees upgrade their home energy performance directly benefits our local economy.

Opportunities to learn more

Visit www.energyupgradesonoma.org for more information about upgrade services, participating contractors, available incentives, financing options, and program details.

Contact Kathy Goodacre, Program Marketing Manager, for more information about the Employee Outreach Program, at (707) 537-1979 or kathygoodacre@sbcglobal.net.

About Energy Upgrade California in Sonoma County

Funding for Energy Upgrade California comes from multiple sources, including federal stimulus funds (American Reinvestment and Recovery Act), the U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings Program, the California Public Utilities Commission, and the California Energy Commission.

Local partners include Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA) and the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) working in coordination locally with the following organizations: Clean Energy Advocates – City of Santa Rosa, Climate Protection Campaign, Solar Sonoma County, Sonoma County Energy Watch, and Efficiency First.

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