

SUCCESS STORY



From Spenders to Savers to Stewards



“It’s the people who made this program work – the students, the staff, and PG&E. We couldn’t have done this project without PG&E’s help.”

Roy Owens
Energy Manager
Vacaville Unified School District



California’s Vacaville School District gets an A+ in Energy Conservation Awareness and Action

How did Energy Manager Roy Owens turn the Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD) into a model for energy awareness? He worked with Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s (PG&E) School Resource Program and rallied the school community around efforts to conserve.

The result was a 20% reduction in energy bills in the first year of the program and over \$525,000 in gas and electricity savings for the 16-campus district in just two school years – an average of almost \$33,000 per school. Over these two years, the VUSD’s decreases in energy consumption kept almost 2,000 tons of carbon dioxide and 1,000 pounds of nitrogen oxide emissions out of the air.

THAT WAS THEN...

In the 2003-2004 academic year, energy costs in the VUSD reached a high of almost \$1.5 million for gas and electricity. Budgets were low, so schools lacked money for needed improvements to the facilities. A successful bond measure had been passed, but it raised only enough money to enable the school district to meet the minimum construction specifications of California’s Title 24 Building Code.

Owens saw an opportunity in the ENERGY STAR® program. Owens obtained the services of PG&E to acquire the ENERGY STAR rating. PG&E offered the services of a professional engineer, historical energy consumption data, cash rebates and incentives, staff workshops, facility energy audits, and general support.

The district kept construction costs down by using their own maintenance and operations staff for installations and equipment retrofitting work.

With the infrastructure in place for energy conservation, Owens could begin the educational part of his mission – changing student and staff behavior.

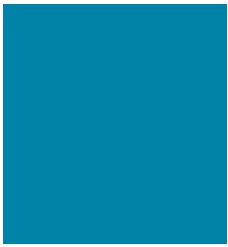
THIS IS NOW...

Today, lower energy-use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) illuminate the classrooms. Teachers control the thermostats in their rooms for optimal comfort. Time clocks and sensors minimize energy consumption for heating, cooling, and lighting, especially during unoccupied periods. Student groups run energy conservation teams such as the JAGS (Jaguars Are Good Savers) and CHASE (Crazy Hawks Are Saving Energy), which brainstorm new ideas for raising awareness and incorporating energy-saving maintenance habits into the schools.

Even the schools that have not yet modernized their buildings receive ENERGY STAR ratings of 84 to 90 thanks to the effectiveness of simple energy-saving habits. Staff and students within the VUSD take pride in their new role as stewards of the environment and reap the benefits by conserving energy and reducing costs.

ENERGY STAR® is a program that is sponsored by the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency, which recognizes businesses and consumers that have met high standards of superior energy efficiency. Schools that score 75 or higher (indicating that they are more efficient than 75% of similar schools) are given this highly sought label.





HOW DOES PG&E HELP?

PG&E offers a wide range of services to help you manage the energy at your schools. Services include energy analyses of existing facilities, design assistance for planned projects, equipment rebates, project incentives, education, and training.

For more information, contact your local PG&E representative, call the **Business Customer Service Center** at **1-800-468-4743** or visit www.pge.com/biz/rebates/schools.



PG&E's Paul Wagner receives a "Certificate of Appreciation" plaque from the Vacaville Unified School District. *(From left to right: John T. Aycok, Vacaville USD Superintendent, Theresa Nutt Buck, Vacaville USD Board President; Paul Wagner, former School Resource Program Conservation Manager at PG&E; Roy Owens, Vacaville USD Energy Manager)*

VUSD'S TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND STAFF HELP BY:

- Adjusting thermostats according to need
- Keeping doors and windows closed when air conditioners are on
- Keeping lights off unless needed
- Reducing energy usage during holiday and vacation periods
- Shutting down computers, printers, and other office equipment at night
- Unplugging all personal appliances such as refrigerators during summer months
- Using time clocks and light sensors wherever possible

VUSD IMPLEMENTED LOW-COST ENERGY-EFFICIENCY TECHNOLOGIES:

- Digital setback thermostats
- Compact fluorescent lamps
- Light Emitting Diode (LED) exit signs
- Vending misers – installed on all vending machines
- Swimming pool covers

VUSD DOLLAR SAVINGS FOR GAS AND ELECTRICITY ONLY:

Energy bill for 2003/04 school year: \$1,394,000 (base year before changes)
 Energy bill for 2004/05 school year: \$1,115,000 (**20% savings** compared to base year)
 Energy bill for 2005/06 school year: \$1,147,000 (**18% savings** compared to base year)



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