

Power Smart Product Incentive Program Success Story



St. James Community Service Society The Story

Saving on energy bills lets the St. James Community Service Society focus their resources where they're needed – on their clients.

“Our buildings are lighter and are brighter and the energy cost savings will help us do our important work.”

Cheryl Hogg, Administrator, St. James Community Service Society

The Situation

The St. James Community Service Society operates eleven facilities, including residential, counselling and administrative buildings. As a not-for-profit society with a limited budget, St. James was eager to find ways to cut costs. St. James' financial services provider, Vancity Credit Union, suggested that the society conduct an energy audit under BC Hydro's Power Smart Product Incentive Program (PIP) to identify potential savings through lighting upgrades.

Vancity's energy manager, Maureen Cureton, reviewed the cost savings and the opportunity for rebates under the Product Incentive Program. The audit showed that even very simple changes such as screw-in compact fluorescents could save the society up to \$5,000 a year. Led by administrator Cheryl Hogg, St. James opted to have nine of their buildings upgraded, including office space, the common area of multi-unit residential buildings, and all of the rooms in other facilities.

However, while the upgrades showed a two-year payback time on electricity savings alone, St. James still faced the barrier of paying the installation costs without dipping into operating funds that were needed for services to clients.

The Solution

Vancity provided a loan to finance the upgrade, as well as a grant to offset all the interest on the loan (making it a zero-interest loan). This allows St. James to finance the upgrade without drawing on its operating budget. Repaying the loan over a three-year term won't be a problem, thanks to annual energy savings of more than \$16,000 and nearly \$12,000 in Power Smart incentives.

The lighting upgrades were carried out by BC Hydro Power Smart Alliance contractor Buy the Right Light Co., a Division of Emax Electric Inc. The project included:

Technology	Number of Retrofits
Converting incandescent lamps to T5 fixtures	43
Converting incandescent exit signs to LED exit lamps or signs	113
Converting incandescent lamps to compact fluorescents	1,110
Converting T12 fluorescent lamps and magnetic ballasts to Energy-Saver T8s with electronic ballasts	395

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The Benefits

Improved lighting quality

Cheryl Hogg and the staff at St. James have been delighted with the improved lighting levels and lighting quality in offices and other areas.

Focused resources

Broader social benefits will come as St. James frees up their budget to provide programs and services to poor and marginalized members of Vancouver's community

Electricity Savings

Retrofits at the nine facilities are saving over 320,000 kilowatt hours, enough to power 32 homes per year, and cutting St. James' electricity bill by about \$16,000 a year. The upgrades will also produce maintenance savings estimated at \$10,000 a year because the new systems are longer-lasting and will need to be changed less often.

Contact Us

Find out how Power Smart can energize your bottom line. For more information on how your facility can benefit from the installation of energy-efficient technologies through the Product Incentive Program, visit bchydro.com/incentives or call 1 866 522-4713.

A Closer Look

Energy Savings Opportunities for Administrative and Commercial Facilities

Upgrading to energy-efficient technologies can significantly reduce energy and operating costs – both immediately and for years to come. Under BC Hydro's Power Smart Product Incentive Program, many energy-efficient products qualify for incentives that can lower paybacks and make projects more attractive.

These energy-efficient technologies are ideal for building facilities, and all qualify for Product Incentive Program incentives:

- **Compact fluorescent lamps** save up to 75% in energy costs over incandescent lamps.
- **Energy-saver T8 fluorescent lighting** saves 40% to 50% on average in energy costs over T12s.
- **LED exit signs** are 90% more energy-efficient than incandescent signs and last up to 25 years.
- **Lighting occupancy sensors** can save up to 70% in energy costs, depending on the room, while extending the life of lighting products and reducing maintenance costs.

Conservation is a great way to start meeting B.C.'s growing need for electricity.

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