

## Local Government Actions to Reduce the Impact of Energy Crisis

Things local leaders can do now:

- ▀ Write a letter to the editor informing the community of the crisis and the importance of local action. Work with the paper's editor to encourage additional energy-related stories that relate to local impacts. (a sample letter follows)
- ▀ Enclose a brief fact sheet in your garbage, water and sewer bills letting people know how to reduce air conditioning requirements -- by shading east, south and west windows with overhangs, awnings, shade screens or vines; opening windows in the cool evening and closing them during the day; using a clothesline to dry clothes, turning the drying cycle of the dishwasher off, and installing compact fluorescent light bulbs. (we have included lists for you to choose from)
- ▀ Approach your local hardware store to advertise and/or do a special display of energy saving products.
- ▀ When renewing business licenses, encourage business owners to reduce light levels, shade windows, turn off unused computer equipment, install LED lights in emergency exit signs, paint flat roofs white, and implement other measures tailored to each specific business. Santa Monica provides specific energy recommendations for various business types at its green building web site: <http://greenbuildings.santa-monica.org>. At the home page, double click on the Green Building Design Advisor.
- ▀ Provide information about Energy Efficiency Mortgages<sup>1</sup> (EEM) at your building permit counter, and request that real estate agents and lenders in your community provide that information to prospective borrowers.
- ▀ Connect large businesses with Energy Service Companies (ESCO) that will retrofit their operation with energy efficiency measures -- paid back through energy savings. The investor-owned utilities (PG&E, SDG&E, and Edison) offer Standard Performance Contracting<sup>2</sup> through ESCOs to do just that.

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<sup>1</sup> EEM is an easy to use, federally recognized program that can be applied to most home mortgages, including refinancing and remodeling. EEMs provide the borrower with special benefits when purchasing a home that is energy efficient or can be made efficient by installing energy-saving improvements. Monthly mortgage payments increase slightly, but borrowers can actually save money because their energy bills will be lower. Learn more about EEMs at <http://www.fsec.ucf.edu/ratings/LndrHndBk/index.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Standard Performance Contracting provides financial incentives for energy-saving projects at existing facilities. Unlike traditional rebate programs, in which dollars are paid for implementing specific measures from a pre-approved list of energy saving equipment, SPC offers financial incentives for custom-designed

- Inform low-income residents of programs that are available for retrofitting their homes. The investor-owned utilities (PG&E, SDG&E, Edison and the Gas Company) offer programs. The City of Berkeley has set up a nonprofit entity to do the same for residents and small businesses that provides training for welfare to work participants. (see the attached reprint from *Currents*)
- Assign a staff person to make sure all local government buildings and operations have been retrofitted with state-of-the art efficiency and energy management measures. If financing is a problem, take advantage of loans from the California Energy Commission which can be repaid through utility bill savings. For more information on the CEC loan program, go to [http://www.energy.ca.gov/contracts/efficiency\\_pon.html](http://www.energy.ca.gov/contracts/efficiency_pon.html).
- Create an energy saving section of your city/county web site with suggestions for homes and businesses. Provide links to your local utilities' web sites and other relevant programs, such as the California Energy Commission's Renewable Buydown Program.<sup>3</sup> (see the City of Irvine's web site for an example: [http://www.ci.irvine.ca.us/about\\_irvine/econ-dev/energy.htm](http://www.ci.irvine.ca.us/about_irvine/econ-dev/energy.htm))
- Call meetings with key community leaders to brainstorm additional creative ideas.
- Important websites:
 

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| US Department of Energy        | <a href="http://www.eren.doe.gov">www.eren.doe.gov</a>   |
| California Energy Commission   | <a href="http://www.energy.ca.gov">www.energy.ca.gov</a> |
| CA Public Utilities Commission | <a href="http://www.cpuc.ca.gov">www.cpuc.ca.gov</a>     |
| Pacific Gas & Electric         | <a href="http://www.pge.com">www.pge.com</a>             |
| Southern California Edison     | <a href="http://www.sce.com">www.sce.com</a>             |
| Southern California Gas Co     | <a href="http://www.socalgas.com">www.socalgas.com</a>   |
| San Diego Gas & Electric       | <a href="http://www.sdge.com">www.sdge.com</a>           |
| Local Government Commission    | <a href="http://www.lgc.org">www.lgc.org</a>             |

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projects. Savings are measured and verified, so customers can be sure that the projected savings are actually realized. Visit the investor-owned utilities' websites for more information.

<sup>3</sup> The CEC provides rebates up to \$3,000 per kilowatt or 50% of the cost of eligible renewable energy electric generating systems. For more information visit <http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/renewable/making/buydown.html>.