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Driving Energy Savings in Businesses Through Behavioral Changes and Business Licenses

Cory Downs, City of Chula Vista (Moderator)

Barbara Locci – Conservation Specialist, City of Chula Vista

Session Title: City of Chula Vista: Free Resource & Energy Business Evaluation

Chula Vista Demographics:

- 243,916 Residents
- 12,000 businesses

Program Overview:

- FREBE – Free Resources and Energy Business Evaluation.
- Goal is to reduce Carbon emissions and save on costs.
- They are now part of the economic development office, from mayors office, to public works, to now.
- Began when implementing Climate action plan, began voluntary, had only 1% participation, so they drafted an ordinance, in 2009, and then jan 2010, started implementing and visiting businesses setting appointments.
- Ordinance was amended in 2015, under economic development, they didn't want to fine businesses, \$15 fine for non-compliance, so after that they decided not to have a fine, and they just sent a letter.
- The team evaluates about 600 businesses every year.
- It was under economic development, so they wanted to be seen as helping businesses.
- They are part of an association and chamber of commerce, collaborating to help businesses. Tight collaboration. Some businesses are exempt – Home based and mobile.
- Businesses are invited in 5 phases. Each phase does not have a specific number of businesses.

Another program – CLEAN Business program

- -co-funded – by recycling grants and the other funds.
- Talk about air quality, transportation, etc. They get designated green businesses, so free marketing from city.
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Program characteristics,

A 9 month long process, the FREBE program

1. Set appointment,
2. Visit business
3. Make recommendations. Give the FREBE report.
4. Connect with SDGE /utility programs

PART I

- Appointments are set in many different ways, when city sends business license renewal letter, there is a section regarding FREBE.
- The appointment can be set online, over the phone, or in person. The web page is a good avenue for customers to use.

PART II

- Sometimes businesses don't look at the back of the letter, so they get flyers. Pamphlet is sent out. They are sent a notice, sept 1st, after they get all these flyers throughout the year.
- Mainly looking at lighting, refrigeration, heating/cooling. Every business is different. An office is very different from a restaurant. So try to talk to them first to know what to look for later, investigate.

Making recommendations

- Connecting them with different resources regarding energy efficiency, water conservation, renewables, financing, and CLEAN Business Program Participation.
- Recommend different programs including savings by design.
 - On SDG&E Business Page, they show them around
 - Business Energy Solutions
 - On Bill Financing
 - Rebates and Incentives

Lessons Learned: the FREBE program

- Each business has business license, including dentists, coffee shop, retail shop, etc. need to be careful of language barriers, or they thought they were being sold on something. Trying to help businesses get rebates and what not without the businesses paying costs upfront.
- No cost measures vs requiring a co pay –
- Utility used to have no cost measures, but as of 2016, requires copay. But businesses don't like to have to fill out forms and what now.

Going through the form....

- The no cost features are highly recommended.
- Example: SEEC Forum Restaurant - that only serves no meat.
- Make sure windows are insulated, insulation on the doors, how they keep the place clean. Etc.
- Someone mentioned low carbon commute. – bike racks
- Sitting area: lighting, hvac, water poured without asking, things to consider

Question: do you consistently track data/ therms from the assessments you do?

There is now a non disclosure agreement that makes it a little more complicated.

Jillian Rich: PG&E

(415) 972-5378 - Jillian.Rich@pge.com

Ariel Carpenter: City of San Jose

(408) 535--8560

Session Title: PG&E Step Up and Power Down Program

Jillian, worked with PG&E's involvement with SEEC three years ago, joked that she'd be back as keynote.

"You're going to leave this session with an outline how you can help your business or office step up their EE."

This is a marketing initiative pilot. Simple changes Big Savings, their new marketing strategy is more artistic, less text.

Ariel Carpenter, participant from san jose in this contest.

- Sam Liccardo-mayor of San Jose, "By pledging to Step Up and Power Down, we are taking another move towards achieving part of our Green Vision goals to cut our per capita energy use in half"
- PG&E shareholders gave up money to give winning cities a million dollars as prize money. The contest primarily focused on San Francisco and San Jose.

- Edwin M. Lee Mayor of San Francisco, "We have to do even more to meet our ambitious climate goals. With our pledge today, we are taking another step to unite businesses in our city to take action with Step Up and Power Down."

Marketing strategy

- Experiential marketing, PG&E handled much larger businesses and cities got SMB on board.
- They had a coffee van going around, with people making pledges, and people would get in line for free coffee, such as Blue Bottle.
- Once businesses signed up, after pledges were made – 2015, 1000 businesses by Jan 2016. So now it's time to get them to do things

Simplicity +Choice = Action

Employing easy actions and robust tools, allowed us to meet customers where they were and to elevate their EE efforts.

(Training/ Energy Audits/ Behavior Campaigns/ Facility Upgrades)

- Training - get the everyday worker to learn about sustainability and how they can influence their boss.
- Energy Audits - utilized engineering audits and business energy checkups.
- Behavior - surveys that described if businesses felt that turning off lights and being energy efficient would be a carrot or a stick.
- Facility upgrades - emphasized that the small steps , such as unplugging chargers, could create big changes.

Ariel –

- small businesses, having them sign a pledge to participate. After businesses would sign up for these pledges, city would have gift bag with energy auditing tools sent to the businesses, and then cities would help energy audits, checking where the businesses were, and then go walk through the businesses through an energy savings checklist. Maybe changing your thermostat, turning off those lights. Some of the most enthusiastic participants would ego into the camping toolkits.
- This gentleman who was a small business owner, data storage owner, who got really into the campaign. Then the marketing evolved, be very multicultural and have these branded on buses and bus stops, etc. In total they exceeded their participation goals.
- They had many different communities reached by profiling local business leaders/owners.

There were large commercial businesses that participated.

- The goal was to have 50 campaigns in large commercial businesses, and they had 53 businesses participate. These are large national/multinational businesses.

On the small and medium sized businesses front...

- Completed 664 engagements (energy saving checklist)
- 130 Direct Install Projects (50% increase): 50% actions taken.

This Campaign really leveraged different groups to make the push, and having a mayors kick-off was really helpful.

Question: Do you have a summary of the total costs, and how does that compare to other programs and relative costs?

We haven't finished a TRC (Total Resource Cost), so took existing marketing budget.

Question: more businesses enlisted, but less savings in San Francisco. Why?

Because in San Francisco, there are generally more businesses, but per business there is less energy usage intensity.

Sample worksheet.

- 1) Pick a behavior
- 2) Create a compelling message
- 3) Choose your campaign

Question: is there a way to apply this campaign to natural gas usage reduction?

Generally this campaign was used for electricity usage reduction

Plan your own behavior campaign

Step1: Pick a behavior

Step 2: Create a Compelling Message

Step 3: Choose your Campaign

Step 4: Plan for Success

Case Study: City of San Jose

Ariel chose Energy Vampire Slayer campaign – Environmental services department

- 4 floors at San Jose City Hall participated
- 142/334 employees participated, or about 43% of the floors total occupants. Before the campaign, they did a stealth assessment to see how much electronics were left on, 42%. After the campaign, it was 20%.
- They were able to recognize participants. Gave tickets for San Jose Tech Museum, to participants who were extremely successful at this.

Question for Barbara, how did you work around those businesses who were less than willing to work with you?

- be really friendly and show them that you are not there to punch any businesses, but help

San Francisco – spoke about street level marketing and how some small medium business actually do not maintain their systems and that makes it very hard to achieve efficiency gains.