

Energy Cost Savings Incentives

In early December 2013, Ontario released its updated Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP), *Achieving Balance*, which encourages conservation and lays out the province's plan for clean, reliable and affordable energy. The province presently has an electricity generation capacity that well exceeds current and near-future demand. So not surprisingly, the new LTEP has put an emphasis on conservation and demand management before building new generation.

In comparison to the 2009 LTEP, the new LTEP claims to reduce projected cost increases by \$16 billion in the near term (2013-2017), and \$70 billion to 2030. The bottom line, however, for rate payers is the fact that electricity rates are expected to continue to increase significantly in the next several years. Energy pricing is putting additional financial pressure on our business community who continue to fight to emerge out of the recent recession.

The WERCC Environment and Energy Committee would like to remind its members that energy conservation incentive programs are available to ease the financial burden of energy usage. These programs were initiated with the passing of the Green Energy Act, and with a renewed emphasis on conservation measures, will continue in the near term. These financial incentive programs available from the province are administered by your local distribution company (LDC).

On the electricity side and the saveONenergy campaign, the most popular program has been the Electricity Retrofit Incentive Program with high-efficiency lighting upgrades leading the way. While this program will continue, and is expected to remain a good option for business, there are many more programs and ways to capitalize on the available funding. For existing facilities, there is funding available for:

- Audits – electricity-focused audits;
- Process & Systems – incentives to upgrade energy intensive processes and systems including costs for preliminary engineering studies, detailed engineering studies and capital investments;
- Existing Building Commissioning – retrofits to increase efficiency of chilled water systems;
- Training & Support – incentives to have a dedicated Energy Manager on-site.

For facilities with standby power systems, enrolling in the Demand Response program can earn you monthly payments for committing to supplying electricity to the grid during peak demand periods. If your business is planning the construction of a new building or a major renovation to an existing building, financial incentives are available for design assistance and projects that exceed the electricity efficiency standards specified in the Ontario Building Code under the High Performance New Construction program.

Pre-approval is required for the saveONenergy programs, so contact your LDC at the concept and planning stage to confirm eligibility.

Similarly, for natural gas users, there are multiple rebate and incentive programs to save on energy costs from space heating and water heating equipment to engineering projects. Space heating programs can include:

- Demand control ventilation system with carbon dioxide sensor
- Air curtains
- Condensing and non-condensing high efficiency boilers
- Infrared heaters
- Energy and heat recovery ventilators

- Destratification fans
- Condensing rooftop make-up air units

Engineering projects incentives are available to identify natural gas savings and increase energy efficiency awareness through programs such as:

- Engineering feasibility studies
- Steam trap surveys
- Process improvement studies
- Integrated energy management system (IEMS)
- Customer education

Note that the incentive programs for natural gas conservation can be obtained retroactively, so if you have recently implemented conservation measures, you may be eligible for government rebates.

Your local LDCs have account and conservation managers that can explain the multiple available conservation incentive programs. There are also local engineering consulting firms involved with assisting their clients with feasibility assessments and implementation of energy conservation programs and energy management systems.