



City of Rancho Mirage

It's No Mirage: Desert City Meets Challenges Of Saving Energy Year-Round

Nestled in Southern California's Coachella Valley desert floor, about 100 miles east of Los Angeles, the City of Rancho Mirage faces dual energy-saving challenges: the city's approximately 18,000 permanent residents have high air conditioning electricity demand when summer temperatures easily top 100°F; and then the 60,000 to 70,000 "snowbirds" who call the city their home for the winter significantly increase energy demand during the winter months.

But the 25-square-mile city is not letting these challenges stop it from taking aggressive steps to save energy and lower its electric bills. With our support, Rancho Mirage is showcasing opportunities to make significant cuts in energy use at its municipal facilities—its City Hall, City Hall Annex, Public Library and its two Fire Stations.

Between 2010 and 2013, Rancho Mirage received Express Solutions incentives for lighting upgrades—and even free energy-efficient products through our Direct Install program that assists local government partners. The city purchased an advanced chiller for the Library using a \$15,000 incentive through the Customized Solutions program, which offers more tailored

equipment upgrades that can help qualified entities attain deeper savings and higher incentives.

The chiller alone reduced energy use by approximately 20% to 30% compared to the older unit. This project, combined with the other upgrades the city implemented with additional incentives from us, helped Rancho Mirage save an impressive 308,500 kilowatt-hours in electricity over the four-year period.

Facility and Fleet Manager Bill Oppenheim said the City's efforts are about more than saving money—though that's certainly a primary focus. For residents, he noted, "We want to be a role model. Some of our projects are very small and our residents can do them very easily. For example, just going from 32-watt fluorescent tubes to 25-watt tubes can save money at a very little up-front cost, which helps everyone."

As for employees, Oppenheim added, "We keep workers knowledgeable—what we're doing, why we're doing it and what type of savings we'll achieve." The city also encourages its employees to save electricity at their own homes.

Project Overview

SCE Programs Utilized:

- Energy Efficiency Express and Customized Solutions
- Direct Install
- Summer Discount Plan (SDP)
- Demand Bidding Program (DBP)

Results:

Overall electricity savings of more than 308,500 kWh*

Overall energy efficiency incentives of approximately \$25,300*

SDP bill credits of \$600*

“I am very pleased with the energy conservation efforts the city has undertaken. We are proud of the energy we have saved throughout the city. The city has a great working relationship with SCE, which has helped the city save energy on several fronts.”

*Iris Smotrich
Mayor
City of Rancho Mirage*

Next Step: Reducing Energy Use With More Demand Response

Rancho Mirage also is participating in demand response (DR) programs. With DR, by reducing energy consumption during peak-demand hours, customers relieve stress on the grid and the environment, and in turn earn bill credits that offset the cost of energy.

From 2010 through 2013, using the Summer Discount Plan (an air conditioning cycling program) at one of its housing authority projects earned the city several hundred dollars in credits. In 2014, Rancho Mirage’s Library dual participated in the Demand Bidding Program, a no-cost, low-risk, flexible DR program that provides bill credits for voluntarily reducing energy use when a program event is called.

Rancho Mirage’s extensive energy-saving efforts have earned it national recognition. In May 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded the city its ENERGY STAR Award, making Rancho

Mirage the first jurisdiction in the Coachella Valley to receive this acknowledgement.

But even with all of its accomplishments, the city is not stopping here. Working directly with the Desert Cities Energy Partnership—which provides funding for additional efficiency incentives—Rancho Mirage is considering several more projects. These include installing solar panels at the City Hall and Library; putting in an energy management system at City Hall; upgrading to an advanced chiller at City Hall; and replacing additional landscape lighting with light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures, among others.

“Proud of the Energy We Have Saved”

As Mayor Iris Smotrich noted, “I am very pleased with the energy conservation efforts the city has undertaken. We are proud of the energy we have saved throughout the city. The city has a great working relationship with SCE, which has helped the city save energy on several fronts.”

So whether Rancho Mirage is serving the needs of its permanent population during often-scorching summers, or addressing an influx of residents for pleasant winter days, it continues to partner with us and serve as a forward-thinking city that helps save energy, money, and the environment.

As an energy manager, you have a wide selection of potential energy efficiency opportunities, and we can deliver energy management programs and solutions with incentives and bill credits to go with them. Our energy management solutions offer a range of efficiency options, developed with your industry in mind, to help your business maximize savings over the long term through the permanent and temporary reduction of electricity usage.



Iris Smotrich

To learn more about SCE energy management solutions, ways to reduce your energy usage, and manage your energy costs, visit sce.com/business or call your SCE Account Manager.

*2010 through 2013

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