



Building Efficiency for Commercial Construction

Energy Efficiency Pays. Now More Than Ever.

Program Update — April 2006 *for Commercial Design and Construction Professionals*

Program Activity Update

The Building Efficiency program was unveiled a year ago in April. Since that time, we've seen significant program activity thanks to all who have participated.

To date, the program has processed incentive payment requests for 23 completed construction projects totaling more than \$94,000 or an average of about \$4,100 per project.

So far, the more than \$55,000 in incentive applications processed in 2006 has surpassed the total payments made for all of 2005 (nearly \$39,000).

High Performance Windows

Windows are critical elements of a commercial building. They can help define the look of a facility and have a significant impact on energy use.

Idaho Power is offering an incentive of \$1 per square foot (of window area) for the installation of high performance windows. High performance windows are designed to maintain the building's interior temperature, to keep the ultraviolet (UV) rays out, and let the visible light in.

Using performance criteria set by the Commercial Windows Initiative (CWI), you can specify windows that reduce the need for heating and cooling while being optimized for daylighting applications.

CWI's goal is to increase the market share of high-performance commercial glazing to 50 percent. They work cooperatively with the region's architects, developers, window manufacturers and utilities to increase the use of energy-efficient glazing.

You can learn more about CWI by visiting their Web site at www.commercialwindowsinitiative.org.

Commissioning Smaller Buildings

Building commissioning is not yet standard practice, although it is becoming more common for large or complicated buildings. The commissioning process for smaller buildings should be simpler, focusing on system balancing, simple functional tests of key systems, and documentation.

Experience has shown that a non-commissioned building will cost 8 to 20 percent more to operate than a commissioned building.

When energy savings, improved equipment lifetimes, reduced change-orders, and all the other benefits of commissioning are accounted for, the savings may essentially offset the entire cost of new-building commissioning.

But wait, there's more. Building Efficiency projects also can earn a bonus for including commissioning in their incentive application. No matter how small your project is, this is an option you'll want to consider.

Earth Day Activities and Opportunities

Earth Day is Saturday, April 22—the 36th anniversary of the first Earth Day. The Idaho Conservation League (ICL) is sponsoring service projects that you and your co-workers may want to participate in. To learn more, go to the ICL Web site at www.wildidaho.org/events.php.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

On April 28, the local ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air conditioning Engineers) chapter will hold its third annual Technical Conference. This full-day conference will be held at Idaho Power and cover topics such as natural ventilation, new cooling technologies, daylighting, federal tax benefits for energy-efficient buildings, and more. To register for this event, call Tony Sutton at (208) 376-8300 or send an e-mail to AEITony@aol.com.

For More Program Information

Do you know of any projects, planned or underway, that may qualify for this incentive? Are the owners or developers unaware of this program? If so, please share this information with them. For answers to other questions, call Curt Nichols at (208) 388-6484.