

Going Light Green in Anacostia

BY CATHERINE PLUME



TOP: After the installation of LED lighting.
RIGHT: Before the installation of LED Lighting.

The DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DC SEU) recently partnered with the Anacostia Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) to increase safety and lower energy costs by installing energy efficient lighting in the AEDC parking garage in Ward 8 through their Commercial/Institutional Program. The lighting upgrade replaced 72 metal halide units with state-of-the-art light-emitting diode (LED) lights. As the lights in the facility run continuously, the energy usage reduction has been substantial, and the replacement is expected to generate \$32,700 in savings during the first year alone.

Before and after pictures of the parking facility show that the lighting

upgrade benefits extend beyond energy and monetary savings. In the first picture, the space is dim, with dark areas. With the upgrade, the space has lighting that provides a clear view and the effect of full daylight.

Building tenants, including the DC Department of Housing and Community Development and Industrial Bank, which had previously voiced concern and cited safety issues about the parking lot, have been delighted with the upgrade. And, in addition to the savings on energy bills, there should be an enormous reduction in maintenance costs as LED lights last some ten times longer than the previous bulbs, which had to be replaced once or twice each year.

Created by the DC City Council

as part of the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2008, DC SEU is overseen by the District Department of the Environment (DDOE). With a \$15M annual budget, DC SEU helps District households, businesses, and institutions save energy and money through energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. Ted Trabue, Managing Director of DC SEU notes, “Our programs allow homeowners and businesses of all income levels to make changes in their buildings that result in significant savings while reducing energy use and carbon footprints”.

Programs for Homeowners

DC SEU helps homeowners improve energy efficiency by offer-

ing rebates to residents who complete energy efficiency upgrades through certified District contractors. DC SEU also provides rebates for upgrading the energy efficiency of qualified multifamily residential buildings with energy-efficient fluorescent lighting upgrades at no cost for installation to owners, property managers, or residents, offering reduced costs for the purchase of energy-efficient lighting products, and distributing energy-efficient light bulbs (CFLs) through District food banks for low-income residents. DC SEU also conducts outreach and education to inform residents about ways they can save energy and reduce costs in their homes.

Programs for Businesses

By 2014, all District buildings (commercial and multi-family) over 50,000 square feet must benchmark their energy efficiency and report that score to the City. DC SEU can help building owners establish their baseline and determine effective improvements that can save money – and energy – through a resource hotline at (202) 525-7036 or benchmarking@dcseu.com. DC SEU also provides technical assistance to improve energy efficiency in DC businesses and institutions by providing reduced up-front costs for upgrading to new energy-efficient technologies and equipment that reduce electric and gas consumption.

DC SEU’s contract with DC DDOE must be approved annually by the City Council. While some rebates expire as soon as September 30, 2012, DC SEU has every indication that the program will be reauthorized by October 1 to coincide with the District’s Fiscal Year.

To learn more about and apply for any of these rebates and incentives, contact DC SEU at 202-479-2222 or info@DCSEU.com.

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