

## Energy Savings for Small Businesses: Simple as A-B-C

When asked how he learned about UI's Small Business Energy Advantage Program, Bruce Butler, owner of Bridgeport Avenue Shell in Shelton replied, "Other Shell dealers around the state told me how they were able to install new lighting because UI financed the work for up to 30 months at no interest."

Conversations like that with his fellow dealers led Butler to get in touch with UI, which got back to Butler right away requesting some basic information. "They told me more about how their small business program could help me save energy—and dollars," he said. "We also talked about financing arrangements and the cash incentive payable under the plan."

Next, UI sent an approved vendor to do a sight survey to see where Bridgeport Avenue Shell could save energy and then draw up and present a proposal. "After all that," Butler said, "making the go-ahead decision was a no-brainer."

In this case, the UI-approved vendor was Efficient Lighting & Maintenance, Inc., out of Brookfield. "Look, here's a guy running a gas station/convenience store that's open for business 24/7," said Efficient Lighting's Tom Phillips. "Anything we could do to cut energy usage would positively impact his bottom-line."

Efficient Lighting recommended two energy-saving measures," Phillips said. "The first was upgrading the store lighting and the second was installing a computerized refrigeration control system."

The lighting upgrade consisted of replacing the store's 21 four-bulb fluorescent fixtures with two-bulb fixtures backed by metal reflectors for better light dispersion. That changeover reduced the per fixture wattage from 160W to 60W.

The refrigeration control system cut unnecessary electricity use. Standard coolers, like those typically used in convenience stores, have built-in heaters to

"That's significant savings, UI Program Administrator Dennis O'Connor said. "As a rule of thumb, we figure that lighting can account for 20-35 percent of a small business's energy use and that installing refrigeration controls can cut energy use by as much as 50 percent.

Butler also spread the balance of the project costs over a 28-month zero-interest free loan. And, his expected payback on his investment is 2.2 years.

How soon did Butler realize his energy savings? "Immediately," he said. In fact, his average monthly bill from September 2004 (the project was completed in August) to the end of the year was \$1,066, as compared to a \$1,264 average bill for the same period in 2003—over a 15 percent drop. "And, he reduce his bill by another \$212 a month when he pays his loan in November 2006," O'Connor said.

Not only Butler was very happy with the results received through UI's Small Business Energy Advantage Program, the process of getting them pleased him no end. "It was so easy working with UI," he said. "They did everything and all I had to do was just sit and listen."

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