

# “WATT?!” How Much is that Energy Bill?!”

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*New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Energy Smart Focus on Municipal Water and Wastewater Facilities, Amy Santos, Red Oak Consulting, under contract to NYSERDA*

**A**ging infrastructure, more stringent environmental regulations and increasing energy costs are creating a “perfect storm” for improving energy efficiency in the water and wastewater sector. Great gains can be achieved by raising municipal awareness of NYSERDA programs, increasing this sector’s interest in energy efficient processes and products, and implementing a collaborative approach to improve the delivery of technical assistance in energy efficiency issues across the State.

For more than 30 years, NYSERDA has helped water and wastewater facilities realize cost savings through energy efficiency improvements. However, most facilities continue to undervalue the long-term economic, environmental and operational benefits of energy efficient processes and products. In late 2007, NYSERDA selected Red Oak Consulting, a division of Malcolm Pirnie Inc., to develop and implement the Energy Smart Focus on Municipal Water and Wastewater Facilities Program in order to provide targeted technical support and training to increase this sector’s awareness of energy efficiency opportunities and to assist water and wastewater utilities with identifying and implementing energy efficient improvements.

To effectively target both technical staff and elected municipal representatives, an “Infrastructure Alliance for Energy Efficiency” was formed, comprised of various public, private and non-profit technical assistance organizations, professional associations, state regulatory agencies and funding providers. Alliance partners support the development of an “energy efficiency culture” within this sector as an innovative and viable solution to controlling operating costs, reducing carbon emissions (through reduced energy consumption) and improving regulatory compliance.

Discussions with Alliance partners, water and wastewater operators and municipal officials confirmed that many facilities face institutional, political and financial barriers to implementing energy improvement projects. Several types of outreach materials will be developed over the course of this five-year program to overcome these

barriers and provide utilities with the tools and resources necessary for the identification and implementation of energy efficiency improvement projects. Key outreach materials include:

## **Self-Assessment Energy Checklists**

Simple opportunities for energy reduction measures

## **Best Practices Fact Sheets**

Descriptions of energy efficiency projects in a case study format

## **Best Practices Handbook**

New York State specific hands-on guide to assist utilities in implementing best energy practices

## **Ask The Expert**

Email link to provide individualized assistance with energy questions

Increasingly stringent environmental regulations, more advanced (and often more energy intensive) treatment technologies, and an aging operator population that is demanding younger operators assume more responsibility make inclusion of an energy efficiency curriculum in traditional training sessions important. Basic operator training to improve operator knowledge of energy costs, energy efficient technologies and technical assistance opportunities has been developed and several training presentations are scheduled to take place in 2008. Additionally, presentations to municipal representatives will take place through Alliance partner venues to raise awareness of the long-term value of investing in energy efficiency improvements.

The Energy Smart Focus on Municipal Water and Wastewater Facilities Program conveys a strong message to New York’s water and wastewater sector, demonstrating multi-agency commitment to a growing culture of energy efficiency awareness in the municipal water and wastewater sector, and actively supporting energy efficiency improvements at the facility level. Many of New York’s water and wastewater facilities have found energy efficiency improvements to be the key to compliance, sustainability and savings. Find out how your facility can reap financial, environmental and operational benefits from participating in NYSERDA programs by visiting <http://water.nyserderda.org> or email us at [water@nyserderda.org](mailto:water@nyserderda.org). ●