

Model City Program

What is a "Model City Program"?

A Model City Program is a community-based program designed to work with businesses, schools, and public agencies within a community to achieve measurable efficiencies in materials, water, and energy use and prevent the generation of solid waste. The program should also promote the resource efficiency concept and educate the business, school, and public agency members of the community.

The program is voluntary and mostly works with small and medium sized businesses and facilities. The main incentive for businesses, schools, and public agencies to participate is to save money.

Local governments and business groups such as the Chamber of Commerce work together to identify local sponsors who will help fund and promote the program.

The program provides technical information and analysis of business operations and processes. It relies both on behavioral changes and capital investments to achieve resource efficiencies. It is therefore vital that the program be staffed with a trained technical resource over a minimum period of two years.

The Resource Efficiency Coordinator (REC) promotes the program and recruits participants, conducts resource efficiency assessments for participants and works with them to implement materials, water and energy saving opportunities. The REC is responsible for measuring the savings generated by the implemented recommendations.

It takes time to begin to see changes. Much of the first year of the program is usually involved in program start-up and getting businesses, schools, and public agencies interested in participating. It is not until the second and third years of a program that you begin to see resource and dollar savings.

Each community is different in its needs, goals, culture and structure, so each program is likely to be designed and set up differently. However, there are some core elements that should be included in each local program;

Model City Program Core Elements:

- Program Plan and funding that covers a minimum two-year period of operation;
- Employment of a full-time local Resource Efficiency Coordinator;
- Specialists who can be called on to help evaluate and troubleshoot materials, water, and energy efficiency issues for the voluntary participants when needed.
- Local program partners/sponsors from both the public and private sectors who are committed to be actively involved in supporting and promoting the program in the community.
- Established measurement program that is designed to measure the amount of resources and dollars saved in the community and evaluate the progress of the local program.
- A plan to promote the success/results of the program throughout the community.

Lessons Learned

- **Funding:** The cost of this type of program is relatively high at start-up. A community with a full-time REC costs between \$37,000 and \$67,000 for the first year, slightly less in the subsequent years.
- **Education and Outreach:** It is vital to establish a solid and diverse base of support of local sponsors who can promote the program and provide access to participants and contribute time and resources. E.g. Chamber of Commerce.
- **Staffing:** Having a REC located in the community is essential. It helps foster effective partnerships with local sponsors and participants and raises the program's profile. The REC will need knowledge, skills and/or extensive training in recognizing material, energy and water efficiencies. The ongoing



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REC interaction and follow-up provides valuable encouragement and troubleshooting, and is a key element to implementation.

Participants will need consistent and regular follow-up. Do not give up. Most small and medium-size businesses have a lot of different demands on their time. Getting them to focus on these issues typically takes longer than anticipated.

- Measuring results: It is essential to measure the impact of implemented changes and comparing it to baseline information. It may take longer before you can start measuring, and the measuring process itself may take longer than you expect, so starting this early is a good idea.

Resources

- "Resource Efficiency Project Summary Factsheet" is a three-page summary of the Resource Efficiency program written by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Based on the experience gained in the Pilot, the factsheet includes recommendations for future programs. Available by contacting William Alsdorf at 503-229-5913, within Oregon 1-800-452-4011, or by e-mail at Alsdorf.William.H@deq.state.or.us.

- "Resource Efficiency Tool Kit" written by DEQ. It includes specific and detailed information on how to start a Model City program. The Tool Kit is divided into two parts. The first is called "Community Tools" and gives communities interested in starting a Model City program step by step information:

- Organize a partnership
- Identify goals
- Estimate costs
- Promote the program
- Measure the impact.

The second part, "Participant Tools," is for the participating businesses or institutions. They will find information to pursue material, water and energy savings.

The "Tool Kit" is available through your local Technical Assistant, or by calling William Alsdorf at (503) 229-5913, within Oregon (800) 452-4011. By e-mail at Alsdorf.William.H@deq.state.or.us.

- DEQ Grant Program. Find information on the DEQ website: Contact your local DEQ Technical Assistant, or Jacquie Moon at (503) 229-5479 or at Moon.Jacquie@deq.state.or.us.

- EPA Grants. Find information at www.epa.gov/epahome/grants.htm.

Referrals to Similar Programs

- Cannon Beach. Contact Kim Bosse, REC, at (503) 436-0230, or kbosse@pacifier.com
- Bend. Contact Melissa Toney, REC, The Recycling Team of Central Oregon at (541) 388-3638, or mtoney@bendnet.com
- Yamhill County. Contact Dave Clark, REC, at (503) 434-7516 ext. 7, or clarkda@co.yamhill.or.us.
- Hood River. Contact Kristin Reese at (541) 386-2000, or greensmart@gorge.net.