

THE PREMIER JOB BOARD
serving the power industry

EnergyCentralJobs.com

FIND YOUR JOB

What is the industry saying? Listen now!

WEBINARS

intelligentutility® WHERE THE SMART GRID MEETS BUSINESS AND REALITY

knowledge
INTELLIGENT UTILITY EXECUTIVE SUMMIT

[Advertise](#)
[Subscribe](#)
[About Us](#)
[Login](#)

[HOME](#) [NEWS & COMMENTARY](#) [CALENDAR](#) [RESOURCES](#) [MAGAZINE](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#)



MEMBERSHIP

HAS

ITS

BENEFITS

MORE...

[Home](#)

SUBSCRIBE

[Back Issues](#)

[Blogs](#)

[Case Studies](#)

[Commentary](#)

[Conferences](#)

[Insights](#)

[News](#)

[Training](#)

[Webcasts - Live](#)

[Webcasts - On Demand](#)

[White Papers](#)

[Advertise/Media Kit/Edit. Calendar](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Utilities LEED us into energy savings

Derek Handova | Feb 08, 2015



Electric utilities have been advancing the LEED revolution for more than a decade. Many of them have incentive programs for building developers, owners and tenants to construct or renovate LEED certified structures or offer technical assistance to help with the LEED process.

LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. As developed by the [U.S. Green Building Council](#), LEED is designed to help building owners and tenants save money and resources and positively affect the health of occupants, while promoting renewable, clean energy.

Do well by doing good

Utilities got involved with LEED for both altruistic and practical reasons. Providing incentives and technical assistance to developers for new buildings and owners and lessees to retrofit existing buildings enables utilities to help preserve the environment and delay construction of new power generation facilities.

"Progressive utilities grasp the value that LEED and other energy-efficiency practices deliver," says Jeff Haydock, president and CEO, ecoCFO LLC, provider of outsourced CFO services for energy and environmental businesses. "This is a great example of how Corporate Social Responsibility programs are not only cost effective for the company but also have benefits that extend beyond their own electric meters."

Electric blue, golden touch

Eric Corey Freed, vice president, International Living Future Institute, and licensed architect with LEED AP certification, has seen interest on the part of utilities to participate in every level of the LEED building process. For example, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) in Northern and Central California has invested resources in helping with all aspects of LEED building construction, including retrofit, according to Freed. PG&E even has its own LEED certified architects based out of the [PG&E Pacific Energy Center](#) to support the creation of energy efficient buildings. For PG&E, "the opportunity is it is less taxing on the grid," Freed says. "Their grid doesn't need to grow."

E-Newsletters

Intelligent Utility Update [info...](#)

Your email address:

[View all Energy Central E-Newsletters](#)

Free On Demand Webinar...

Extracting Value from Energy Data

Big Data can reveal game changing insights that improve the energy business—from wholesale market savings, better renewables integration, and greater grid efficiency to information driven energy savings and time-based pricing

View Now

Recommended Reading

[Magazine](#) [News](#) [Insights](#)

[IT, OT: Come together, right now \(and reap the benefits\)](#)
Staff Writer

[Enabling a unified smart city vision in four easy steps](#)
Follow this path to success
Kathleen Wolf Davis

[Utilities: the future's distribution system platform](#)
Insights from Con Edison
Sergej Mahnovski

[SEPA prez brings in the light](#)
Traditional utilities meet a new solar wave
Kathleen Wolf Davis

Elsewhere in the Golden State, another utility has gone beyond mere support for LEED to get actively involved in a project that planners hope will transform the very way transportation is conducted in Southern California. Having just begun operations in the throes of a grand opening gala in December 2014, the Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC) building has been supported by the Anaheim Public Utilities since the beginning.

"On the ARTIC project, the utility provided energy efficiency and LEED accreditation guidance during early project planning," says Janet Lonneker, assistant general manager, Electric Services, Anaheim Public Utilities. "[Anaheim Public Utilities](#) is providing incentives on solar panels, LEED Platinum certification and EV charger installation on the ARTIC project."

Incentives for alternatives

In addition to solar panels and electrical vehicle (EV) charging, utilities have been at the forefront of incentivizing other alternative and green energy solutions in the name of LEED as well as renewables. For example, as late as 2013, Phoenix-based utility [Arizona Public Service \(APS\)](#) was providing up to \$75,000 in rebates for ground source geothermal heat pumps, according to Jeremy Meek, sustainability programs manager, Desert Star Construction, which builds high-end luxury homes and helps owners apply for incentives from the utilities to help defray the cost.

As everyone knows, Phoenix is extremely hot in the summer. And traditional heat pumps cannot sustain the desired temperature in houses, so cooling towers are needed to make up the capacity difference, according to Meek. A particular house came to mind for Meek when discussing how renewable energy ground source geothermal heat pumps can replace traditional heat pumps and cooling towers.

For this project, Desert Star Construction drilled twelve 350-foot wells in a closed loop capped system where the water circulated by geothermal pump dissipates heat underground. If this had been a traditional heat pump-equipped house, there would have been 12 to 15 condenser units. In a hybrid ground source geothermal heat pump system, only three towers are needed to replace those condenser units, according to Meek. Needless to say, much less power is required for hybrid. Although, it has a larger upfront cost, which can be offset by an APS rebate.

However, 2015 funding for APS renewable energy rebates is under review, according to Meek. Be that as it may, Desert Star Construction is still building houses for owners who can apply for the 30 percent federal tax credit, which is for any eligible renewable energy system.

LEEDing the way

Even as certain utility LEED and energy-saving programs are in a state of "upheaval," as some experts describe them, others are moving forward. One such utility is PPL in Pennsylvania. According to [its website](#), PPL will provide "up to \$15,000 in incentives to help organizations complete programs such as LEED, ISO 50001 or the [U.S. Department of Energy Better Buildings Challenge](#)."

Under another program called "Energy Culture," the utility will assist businesses, nonprofits and state and local agencies in developing wide efforts to lower electricity use. For example, PPL counsels that organizations should "encourage employees to turn off their computers when they leave for the night."

Reach out: utilities will be there?

In spite of the efforts of utilities such as PPL, overall, utility LEED programs still need more outreach because of their lack of uptake. "Building owners need to take more advantage of LEED programs due to benefits such as rebates and incentives attached to the programs," says Aanchal Singh, research analyst, building management technologies, Frost & Sullivan. "Utilities have rebates, and projects can earn more LEED points by participating in existing utility-sponsored programs."

However, in one positive example of outreach, Singh says that [Ontario Power Authority \(OPA\)](#) has a long and reputable history of offering a comprehensive list of green and energy efficiency incentives and programs. And for educational outreach purposes, OPA uses third-party marketing development agencies. But this is a good sign, as it could only create much needed awareness of utility LEED programs, she says.

[more articles](#)

Jobs

Featured

Most Recent



Senior Market Monitoring Analyst



Maintenance Manager - Hartford, CT



Senior Category Manager



Business Analyst



Plant Superintendent Job



Co-Op - System Planning Fall 2015

[More jobs](#)

Upcoming Events

Webcasts

Conferences

Training

Best Practices for Demand Management Program Design

Mar 26, 2015
12:00 PM EST

How to Make Analytics a Strategic Priority

Apr 14, 2015
(All day) EST

[more webcasts](#)

Derek Handova is a veteran journalist and content marketer writing on various B2B vertical beats. He started as associate editor of Micro Publishing News and has worked more recently as a freelance reporter for Digital Journal, Economy Lead and Intelligent Utility. He can be reached at handovafreelance@gmail.com.

Learn how smart metering, better building automation, LEED programs and other more intelligent tech are all helping drive the smart cities movement around the world. Save the date for Energy Central's Smart Cities 2015 conference May 12-13, 2015 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Learn more at <http://smartcities.energycentral.com>

Related Topics

- [Energy Efficiency](#)



[Discussion FAQ](#) [Share / Save](#)    

Want more news and insights? [Sign up for a FREE industry newsletter](#)

A banner for EnergyCentralJobs.com. On the left, there are icons for a graduation cap, a person, and a wind turbine, with a purple box containing the text "FIND YOUR JOB". To the right, the text reads "THE PREMIER JOB BOARD" in purple, "serving the power industry" in black, and the EnergyCentralJobs.com logo featuring a penguin.