

## **CEE CASE STUDY: State of Idaho**

### **QUOTES**

*"I calculated possible savings from shutting off computers when not in use. We could save thousands of dollars each month if we shut them off at night!"*

Mike Despot, Manager of Facility Services, Division of Public Works

*"We reviewed all of our buildings for energy efficiency, and completed energy upgrade projects over the past two years earning a savings of \$27,000/year. Idaho Power rebates have helped us make larger up front investments."*

Ken Fresee, Facilities Manager, Health and Human Welfare

*"We buy CFLs, and generally have them in stock rather than incandescents, unless someone specifically asks for something else. I try to recommend energy efficient alternatives when available."*

Janet Garret, Buyer, Idaho Department of Water Resources

### **FACTS**

- The State of Idaho became an EPA Green Lights partner in the early 1990's.
- Electricity rates are 3.5 cents/kWh, well below the national average.
- The state supported development of an independent building operators association called the Idaho Building Operators Association to foster energy efficiency practices in facilities throughout the state.

### **OVERVIEW**

The State of Idaho is a Pacific Northwest state with a population of approximately 700,000. The executive branch of state government operates twenty departments occupying an estimated 3-4 million square feet of facilities. The largest agencies – Public Works, Transportation, Health and Welfare, Fish and Game, Education, and Parks and Recreation – have their own in-house engineers to develop energy projects and specify energy efficient products. The others are dependent on consultants from Public Works or the private sector. Within the Purchasing Department, there are over 60 personnel responsible for product, equipment and supply purchases. The capital budget for the State of Idaho is \$24 million including alterations and repair.

### **FINDINGS**

Like most public entities, the State of Idaho's procurement function is governed by a public bid process. Key criteria for product selection are reducing the cost of operation, keeping customers/users satisfied, and staying within the budget. All of the buyers we spoke with were open to learning more about energy efficient products and encouraging these purchases. They also felt that mandating energy efficiency purchases was virtually impossible.

The state has an energy code for new construction and renovation projects. There is no state policy for energy efficiency appliance purchases. The state makes energy efficient products available (e.g., lamps and electronic ballasts), but the ultimate choice is up to the end user. The Dept. of Water Resources has done an education and marketing campaign and dedicated \$100,000 to do energy audits on existing buildings. They are also currently looking to fund a building commissioning program.

The State of Idaho purchases products from most of the Toolkit product categories. While energy efficiency is not a driving criteria, we found several individuals who emphasized energy efficient choices in their decision making, and were interested in more information for continuing efforts in the future. Vendors and service providers play potentially the strongest role in product specification, though energy efficiency has not been a strong focus of contractors.

Two processes were identified as barriers to energy efficiency. One is lack of technical expertise in energy efficiency in most agencies; and the other is energy savings not returning to the agency responsible for the efficiency project.

There is tremendous opportunity for energy efficiency purchases in the next few years. The state has 206 active renovation and new construction projects, with another 100 more this year. Most of the buildings are older, without efficient equipment. The state is seeking a grant with IDWR and the Department of Energy to do building commissioning. Educating building operators would also offer energy savings benefits.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Hundreds of State Agency retrofit projects are on the slate for future action. There are opportunities to make these projects more efficient by raising awareness among the facility managers and purchasing agents involved in writing the specifications. There is also a large potential opportunity for working with vendors who contract with the State, as they are a significant source of information for specification writers. State procurement staff supported the following recommendations:

- Work with existing Rebuild America partnerships in the State, especially local utilities and universities to help advance energy efficiency within the State facilities.
- Give a presentation at quarterly purchasing meetings organized by Frank Pierce, State Purchasing Training Coordinator. These meetings reach 75 state department buyers.
- Work with local facility manager associations such as the Idaho Building Operators Association (IBOA) to offer presentations at chapter meetings and annual conferences on energy efficiency procurement to increase awareness among facility managers.
- Seek opportunities to improve vendor/service provider-buyer relationships. We observed dissatisfaction from facilities staff with the services they received from contractors and vendors. Convening a meeting of product vendors to identify barriers selling energy efficient products to state and public entities might improve relationships.
- Highly interactive educational seminars tailored to the procurement functions and designed to create dialogue between the parties: facility manager, purchasing agent, and vendor.