



City of Cambridge

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News Release

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City of Cambridge Employees Respond to Call for Conservation by Reducing Electricity Usage 10% in Three Months

In October 2008, the City of Cambridge launched an aggressive internal program called *Cambridge GreenSense* to encourage employees to reduce energy use at work by adopting some basic, commonsense conservation practices.

The results from the first three months are in! From October through December 2008, city employees helped reduce electric usage in 36 municipal buildings by 10% compared with the same period last year! The total amount of electricity saved during these first three months would be enough to power 14 homes or five Cambridge fire stations for a year.

Behind the overall reduction are some truly impressive department-specific achievements:

- The Dept. of Public Works complex cut electricity use by 17%
- The Cambridge Fire Department lowered its use by 14%
- Cambridge City Hall cut its electricity use by 13%

Some additional accomplishments of note by city departments during this time period:

- Cambridge Water Dept. completed the installation of high efficiency lighting and occupancy sensors, which contributed to a 3% electricity reduction.
- The Cambridge Cemetery weatherized its garage and administration building with Icynene insulation, a high-performance ENERGY STAR-rated product.

About Cambridge GreenSense

Cambridge GreenSense was launched in October 2008 to encourage City of Cambridge employees to adopt practices that reduce energy consumption. The first GreenSense Energy Tip was *Turn it Off*, which informed employees of the impact that turning off lights and office equipment would have on the City's electricity bill and its carbon footprint.

Ellen Katz, DPW Fiscal Director, reports that the key to building awareness among employees was empowering "Champions" within each department. "We have a team of 70 Energy Champions who volunteered to be GreenSense ambassadors," said Katz. "They held meetings with their co-workers to spread the word about turning off lights and equipment; they hung posters and placed 'Turn it Off' stickers throughout their buildings. Now it's on to Energy Tip 2 - Power Down, which focuses on turning off computers, printers, and peripherals at the end of each day."

Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council and Energy Champion for the department, says, “People are becoming competitive, playfully but effectively!”

Bruni Guzman, Energy Champion in the City Clerk’s Office, reports, “We have had a great response from our office and the results from Tip 1 – *Turn if Off* show that our work has really paid off. Our building has done really well and we hope we can get equal results from Power Down, or better!”

While Katz cautions that future results may be less dramatic than they were in the beginning, the real benefit comes from developing more energy efficient behavior as part of a normal routine.

If you have any questions about the GreenSense program, the initial results, or would like posters and program materials, please contact, Kari Hewitt, DPW Energy Specialist, at khewitt@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-6947.