

Commercial Technical Team Meeting Notes
March 25, 2009

Update: Inaugural Community Climate Action Summit, April 16, 2010.

- Henry Mueller volunteered to report out for the commercial technical team, if that is a format at the Summit.
- It was discussed whether to report out on the CECO project. A question was raised if regulating through a CECO is inevitable? Further discussion revolved around the need to paint a picture of the present and planned opportunities for energy efficiency retrofits in the commercial sector and how that would impact a CECO. It's important to add in the challenges of the commercial sector program launch, which specifically pertains to the trade alley partners and market transformation. Other challenges pertain to: multiple tenants/one meter, different timing of leases in the same building and large landlords.
- It will be important to gather "bright spots" of successes.
- Some of the Community CAP Summit discussion topics will lead into and continue in the BGBG conference that is scheduled for April 26. Staff will invite commercial contractors to the Community Climate Action Summit.
- Boulder County PACE team will report out on its program.

Explanation of the PACE (Partners for a Clean Environment) Business Survey results

County staff discussed highlights of a PACE survey that 100 Boulder County businesses participated in and gave feedback on the desirability of a 2 Techs type of program delivery model and financing tools to make energy efficiency improvements. The survey results revealed valuable information about the services and financial incentives the business would use.

New Commercial Energy Efficiency Program Presentation

County and City staff presented the new commercial energy efficiency programs staff recently developed. The goal was to use existing program infrastructure and create new infrastructure to give access to information, services and financing. The three main components of the new strategy are; education, tune-ups and change outs of equipment. Education will be the first entry point in a business and will introduce the business to no-cost strategies and freebies as a way to increase energy efficiency at work. Educations will focus on employee behaviors and operations inside a building. Tuning up equipment will be marketed to specific building sectors, i.e. restaurants, office space, convenience stores and grocery stores depending on equipment tune up needs. The assessments and upgrades will focus on implementation assistance to complete lighting and HVAC upgrade projects in businesses.

Include in the messaging to businesses why energy efficiency programs are important. Education should also include information regarding the building comfort. There are many ways to market the program, messaging should be created around saving money, using the regulatory “stick” of a possible CECECO, energy and greenhouse gas savings, the goals within the Climate Action Plan and the city’s history on the efforts of meeting the CAP goals. Also, include easy steps on how to participate in the program; such as:

1. Conduct an assessment
2. Implement energy efficiency measurements
3. Fill out rebate paperwork

Financial Tools Discussion

Finance tools for businesses need to be explored further, i.e. bridge loans. If bridge loans were made available, what is the threshold for payback to businesses investment required for uptake of this financing tool? How much money is a business willing to invest?

Tenants in office buildings want assistance with energy efficiency measures. Give ROI, in addition to payback on investments to help sell the programs.

CECECO may require building tune-up and assessment every “x” amount of years.

Rebates are available for commercial refrigeration equipment. Include an energy cost incremental increase. It was discussed to have clear data on the true cost for lifecycle of cheap or inefficient equipment.

The tech team members expressed support of the energy efficiency program strategy that was presented.

Commercial Program Strategy

It’s important to gather success stories and testimonies from businesses who have implemented energy efficiency measures, received rebates and can calculate project costs, energy savings, and rebates. Advertising the positive program and project experiences from one business to another will be critical for the business sector. Creating case studies from this information will be a key for the business networking groups to share with its peers.

Don’t leave assessments to Xcel, build on the contractor’s network. Bundle Xcel rebates with federal tax incentives to show project costs. Package and deliver the most common measures together to give business options to leverage its investments.

How do we best direct businesses to these services? Social and business mobilization.