

## Delray Beach Saves Money With Smart Energy Efficiency Projects

by Eli Yewdall, Regional Officer, Mar 30, 2011



With a difficult economy and tight budgets, local governments are having to find ways to do more with less, and sustainability staff in particular find it necessary to come up with innovative approaches to get projects done. I recently talked to one city that has done a lot with a little: Delray Beach, FL.

### Reducing Costs

Like many local governments, Delray Beach has used EECBG funds for energy efficiency measures that bring significant cost savings to the City while reducing emissions:

- New lighting fixtures at Pompey Outdoor Athletic Field will reduce energy costs by \$15,000-\$20,000 per year.
- Replacing lighting and installing motion sensors and programmable thermostats at the police department building is expected to save \$30,000 per year.
- Similar EECBG-funded retrofits at several other City facilities are in progress or planned

### Increasing Reach Through Partnerships

In addition to grant funded projects, Delray Beach has successfully developed partnerships to implement several sustainability projects at no cost to City:

- A professor and student group at Florida Atlantic University are completing the City's government operations inventory.
- Several solar trash compactors for city parks were donated by Waste Management. These produce cost savings for the City by reducing trash pick-up frequency.
- Delray Beach is working with the non-profit Plug-in Florida to install five or six EV charging stations around downtown
- The City plans to issue an RFP for a privately financed bikeshare program.

These successes owe a lot to the initiative of the City's Sustainability Officer, Richard Reade, who also serves as the City's Public Information Officer. Reade says that combination of roles works well because of the ability it gives him to communicate to the public about sustainability. For example, sustainability themes are a regular focus of the City's monthly and quarterly [Newsletters](#). On forming partnerships for sustainability projects Reade says 'there are people who want to work with local governments because it reflects well on them; you just have to be willing to go out and ask.'