

Preparing low-income communities for TOU rates

Southern California Edison (SCE) and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) have a long-standing partnership to implement zero net energy (ZNE) systems on existing low-income housing properties. But after almost a decade of retrofits, the question remained...

Are property staff and residents making behavior choices that undermined the goal of reducing their energy burden?



Leveraging Time of Use

With the pending launch of SCE's Time of Use pricing structure, there was an opportunity to work with one of California's leading low-income housing groups to develop an energy education roadmap. The roadmap would educate property staff and residents on how to optimize high efficiency technologies, leverage existing incentive programs and institute energy management strategies and that could scale portfolio wide.

Taking the best ideas from successful low-income pilots

Pilots in Seattle (Puget Sound Energy) and Nashville (Tennessee Valley Authority) had successfully implemented Strategic Energy Management (SEM) best practices across a range of multifamily properties (including low-income and senior housing), achieving **verified energy savings**, increased **participation in utility programs**, and increased **overall relationship** with their customers. The SCE-EPRI team leveraged key learnings from these efforts to begin development of an energy education roadmap for their California participants.



Understand limitations

Energy use is a new focus for multifamily customers.



Focus on staff

They are your best strategy for making change.



Give them a list

Rather than an energy dashboard.



Arm them with tools

Language and strategies they can use to educate.



Provide incentives

Low-and no-cost support available through their utility.

SCE low-income multifamily

energy education

roadmap



STEP 1

Site visits

Walk through participating properties to better understand upgrade opportunities and how the facilities use energy.

OUR PARTICIPATING PROPERTIES

- ✓ Affordable housing in Lancaster, CA
- ✓ Senior housing in Ontario, CA



STEP 2

Management workshops

Make sure management understands Time of Use pricing, strategies for managing energy use and low- and no-cost assistance available through SCE.

OUR ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Strategies for managing peak pricing
- ✓ SCE rebates and bill assistance
- ✓ Roadmap for education



STEP 3

Staff training

Educate property staff on Time of Use pricing and what they can do to manage energy use in common areas.

OUR TOOLS

- ✓ Email
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Signage



STEP 4

Resident education

Provide staff with tools to educate residents. Campaigns are better received when they come from a trusted community member.

OUR TOOLS

- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Events/workshops



STEP 5

Technology initiatives

Suggest longer-term initiatives to help manage energy costs through technology upgrades.

OUR INITIATIVE

- ✓ Smart Thermostats portfolio wide

“I now know how TOU works and what we can do to help manage energy use.”

PORTFOLIO MANAGER,
WESTERN REGION

“I am going to start scheduling our meetings and events during non-peak hours.”

PROPERTY MANAGER,
SENIOR COMMUNITY

“I appreciate the tools for educating staff and residents.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
MANAGER