

Philadelphia Water Department

Conservation Assistance Program

The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) has managed the Conservation Assistance Program (CAP) since 1986. CAP is a direct-installation effort designed to assist low-income and "payment-troubled" customers better manage their water consumption through education and water efficiency measures and repairs, and in particular to help lower future water usage and cost. The program has resulted in an impressive average household water savings of 25%.

The Water Department has contracted the administration of the CAP program to the Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia, Inc. (ECA), an organization that provides a range of social services in the City. The program is delivered by Neighborhood Energy Centers (NEC) located throughout the City and subcontracted by the ECA. The NECs are considered essential to the success and endurance of the program. These independent, education-oriented, community-based centers provide a range of services including job training, day care, and after-school programs, as well as various government fuel assistance efforts. The Centers are well-known in the areas they serve, therefore the marketing of the program is minimal, consisting mainly of NEC counselors informing customers of it, announcements in the NECs' newsletters, workshops, and occasional bill stuffers by the Water Department.

As a revenue-generating department with an abundant supply of water, the Philadelphia Water Department is not looking to save peak demand or sell less water through the CAP program. Instead, the emphasis of the program is on education about water use, minor plumbing repairs, and efficient devices so that customers can reduce and pay their water bills. This said, the program has saved water. The annual water savings per participant is almost 4,000 ft³ at a cost per treated house of \$186 including measures installed, labor, marketing, and administration. CAP not only repairs minor leaks and installs water-efficient devices such as low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators, but also takes the time to explain how the products work, how to maintain them, how to perform minor repairs, and how a customer may change his or her habits concerning water usage.

CAP has been successful in fulfilling several objectives including water savings, payment behavior, and cost-effectiveness. The reductions in water usage in treated homes average 25% with most of the savings coming from the highest usage customers. Bill arrearage decreased an average of \$33, and for every dollar invested in CAP the Water Department receives \$1.48 in benefits through reduced future arrears over a ten-year period. With a substantial rate increase in the last two years, the program has become an even more important tool in aiding Philadelphia's low-income water customers.

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PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT Conservation Assistance Program

Sector: Low-income customers in arrears

History: CAP began in 1986 for low-income, "payment troubled" customers; average home savings of 4,000 cubic feet, equivalent to 25% of pre-retrofit consumption

Mechanism: City pays up to \$250 per treated home; administered by the Energy Coordinating Agency and delivered by several Neighborhood Energy Centers (NECs) which concurrently implement other City programs; NECs staffed by local citizens who not only detect and fix major leaks but who also install efficiency measures while educating customers about water efficiency and reducing water bills

Measures: High-performance showerheads and faucet aerators; toilet retrofit devices; toilet, pipe and faucet repairs

1992-93 CUMULATIVE PROGRAM DATA

Water savings:	15,786 MCF
Lifecycle water savings:	106,418 MCF
Participants:	3,981
Cost:	\$497,700

The Results Center produced 126 profiles of the most successful energy efficiency and renewable energy programs in the United States and around the world in the early and mid 1990s. With the support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ted Flanigan directed a research team at Colorado-based IRT Environment to produce and distribute these exceptional examples. Thanks to strong demand for solid case studies, The Results Center was supported by dozens of major utilities and energy associations worldwide. Today, The Results Center is managed again by Ted Flanigan, now at California-based EcoMotion Incorporated, a firm focused on strategic consulting, information dissemination, program design, outreach services, and aggressive implementation. To nominate highly successful programs, contact: The Results Center, c/o EcoMotion, 15375 Barranca Parkway, F-104, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 450-7155, or TFlanigan@EcoMotion.us