

Portland General Electric

Energy Resource Center

Portland General Electric (PGE) opened the Energy Resource Center (ERC) in November 1986 with the goal of "turning technology into competitive advantage" for its customers. Approximately 10,000 people have passed through the ERC doors since its opening. The ERC has blossomed into more of a regional center, helping interested commercial & industrial professionals from all over the Northwest. The increased "regionalization" of the ERC is a trend that PGE hopes to aggressively pursue. PGE believes that the ERC has helped the utility become much more directly involved with technology transfer and influencing energy choices. More specifically the ERC has helped PGE better reach its commercial and industrial customers.

The ERC is staffed by the Energy Resource Group (ERG), a collection of five full-time specialists in the fields of: lighting; electrical, mechanical and industrial applications; commercial food facilities; and a wide range of energy information. The capabilities of the ERG include seminars, workshops, classes, market development planning, and on-site technical support and training.

The ERC facility contains a lighting lab, demonstration kitchen, an exhibit area, a technical library, an auditorium, and an electric vehicle center.

In terms of promoting more or less electricity use, the ERC focuses on the needs of each individual customer. If energy efficiency is the top priority for a particular client, then the ERG presents that customer with energy efficiency options. If another customer is best served by a certain electrotechnology, (which might actually increase electricity use) the ERG will recommend that technology. In general, PGE seeks to achieve a balance between energy efficiency and beneficial usage of electricity.

The ERC has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1,000,000 (nominal dollars), and PGE spent an estimated \$983,083 on initial remodeling costs before opening the facility. In 1991 the ERC began charging for classes and seminars in order to help offset costs and meet the budget.

A major emphasis is placed on offering classes and seminars that are of interest and importance to commercial and industrial professionals. As a result the ERC is constantly examining which classes are popular, which are not, what areas the ERC might not be covering, and which classes or topics the ERC should drop.

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PORTLAND GENERAL ELECTRIC Energy Resource Center

Sector: Commercial and industrial

Measures: Lighting; electrical, mechanical, and industrial applications; commercial food equipment

Mechanism: Seminars, classes, workshops, and consulting for commercial and industrial professionals

History: Opened in November 1986

1992 Program Data

ERC visitors: 2,000

ERC costs: \$905,900

Cumulative Data (1986 - 1992)

ERC visitors: 10,000

ERC costs: \$6.04 million

Estimated Start-up Costs

Tenant improvements: \$732,189

Equipment costs / other: \$250,894

Total costs: \$983,083

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