

February 2, 2009

## **San Mateo County Receives Flex Your Power Award** **Pacific Gas & Electric to Present Rebate Check, Demonstrates “Green” Strategy Pays Off**

**REDWOOD CITY, Calif.** – San Mateo County’s leading role in energy efficiency and conservation will be celebrated Tuesday with a Flex Your Power Award and a rebate check from Pacific Gas & Electric for \$418,344.

San Mateo County was chosen among hundreds of applicants to be honored with an “Energy Efficiency” award from Flex Your Power, California’s statewide energy efficiency and marketing campaign. The award recognizes projects in 17 County facilities that have dramatically cut energy use by 3 million kilowatts and 100,000 therms annually.

That translates to an annual savings of \$450,000 in utility bills and reduced greenhouse gas emissions of 1,400 tons a year. The energy savings equal the electricity needed to power 2,500 California homes for a year.

“This is a real win-win. We are taking action to impact climate change and we are saving taxpayer dollars,” said Supervisor Richard S. Gordon, Chair of the Board of Supervisors Environmental Quality Committee. “We intend to do all we can as a county to reduce our carbon footprint. This award and rebate honor our efforts and encourage us to continue on the current path to greater energy efficiency.”

The award and rebate check will be presented to the Board of Supervisors at 9:15 a.m. Tuesday in the Board Chambers, 400 County Center, Redwood City.

Projects include replacing lights with energy-efficient bulbs, installing a computer power management program to reduce energy use in more than 5,000 computers and improving heating and air conditioning systems to ensure maximum efficiency. Meanwhile, the County expects to complete 12 more projects by this spring that will save an additional 1 million kilowatts and reduce another 300 tons of greenhouse gas emissions a year.

Pacific Gas & Electric and the Association of Bay Area Governments assisted San Mateo County by offering rebates and technical assistance under the Energy Watch program. That work will pay off Tuesday with a rebate check of \$418,344.97.

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San Mateo County has demonstrated a continued commitment to the environment. In October 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Cool Counties initiative, a declaration to reduce carbon emissions. The County is also replacing older fleet vehicles with energy-efficient models, installing solar panels where possible and making composting, waste reduction and water conservation priorities.

“The cost savings we’ve experienced and the rebate check demonstrate that taking steps to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions is good for the bottom line,” said Deputy County Manager Peggy Jensen, who coordinates the County’s “Green” efforts. “This is good news for taxpayers at a time when our budget is stretched in so many ways.”

The total cost of all Energy Watch programs is estimated at \$1.3 million. With the rebate check and expected annual savings on utility costs of \$500,000, the cost of the work will be recovered in less than two years.

The annual “Flex Your Power” awards highlight businesses and government agencies that demonstrate determined efforts to save energy, water and reduce carbon emissions in California.

“The awards present an opportunity for California to congratulate the leadership shown by this year’s Flex Your Power award winners, who have demonstrated that we can all save money and the environment,” said Walter McGuire, director of Flex Your Power. “By reducing their energy use, this year’s Flex Your Power award winners have saved more than \$227 million, 1.5 billion kilowatt hours, 122 billion gallons of water, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 1.3 billion pounds.”

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