

EnerPath, A Star of Energy Efficiency

By Carter Williams

EnerPath of Redlands, CA deserves a Star of Energy Efficiency for its transformation of energy audits for small businesses and homes. Their software takes all of the confusion and delays out of the energy audit process and makes it hard to say “No.”

The components of these audits include:

PDA-based Energy Audits: Energy Auditors use a mobile computing technology to capture information about a customer’s facility and evaluate their energy efficiency options. On the spot, customers receive a printed report (in 6 languages) showing the recommended upgrades and quantifying the costs and benefits.

Transaction System: When a customer agrees to implement the efficiency improvements, the PDA system records a digital signature, debits the appropriate program budgets, processes any additional credit card payments, records all materials, and assigns the installation to a pre-qualified local contractor via wireless communications.

Contractor Interface: In real-time, a digital statement of work is sent to the local contractor for a specific installation date and time. The system maintains a record of all approved efficiency upgrades and associated materials which are then verified post-installation.

Web Dashboards: Web-sites and dashboards allow program managers, elected officials, contractors, customers, and citizens to instantaneously view and manage progress along the entire process.

Over ten years, EnerPath has implemented energy conservation measures in over 100,000 homes and businesses. Their Southern California 2005 Summer Initiative Direct Install Program reduced 3.1 MW of electrical demand and 13.8 GWh annual savings for 3,550 small commercial customers sites in less than 16 weeks. The Palm Desert “Set to Save” Program with Southern California Edison, Southern California Gas, The Energy Coalition, and the City of Palm Desert is averaging 12,600 kWh and 1,954 kWh per customer in 800 small commercial sites and 3,200 home respectively in this year alone. The LADWP Lighting Efficiency Program, in 9 months, 20 auditors and over 10 contractors installed energy-efficient lighting systems in nearly 20,000 small businesses.

Their revolutionary approach can be used in conjunction with community-based organizations to train locals to conduct the audit on PDAs, hire pre-certified local contractors to perform the work, and hire local energy engineers for quality control. The entire project is reported in real time to a dashboard to the sponsoring organizations, such as the local utility, mayor, etc. This program can be replicated anywhere in the Nation and help energy efficiency reach more homes and businesses.

