

STORIES BEHIND THE BATTLE



Vons Credit Union

Vons Credit Union
El Monte, Calif.

RECOGNITION:

#1 winner, bank/financial institution category
20% energy use reduction

SAVINGS:

27% energy savings
\$1,400 estimated cost savings
23 MtCO₂e greenhouse gas emissions prevented

BUILDING STATS:

Type: Bank/financial institution
Ending EUI: 133 kBtu/Sq. Ft.

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“Start today! Our biggest struggle, throughout the course of the project, was getting the project off the ground. However, once we started making small initial changes, everything started to snowball, and we began making noticeable strides toward our energy conservation goals.”

Combining solar with efficiency to make a big impact

The Vons Credit Union team is committed to their membership and the planet. They believe that they should work to make California, where they're located, a better and cleaner place to live while being a responsible corporate partner. In 2009, they decided to put this principle into practice. They installed a cool roof and 280-panel roof-top solar power system to reduce their building's energy consumption and draw power from a more sustainable source.

The results were phenomenal; the system instantly cut their energy bill by 40 percent. When they realized the cost savings in real dollars, and the positive environmental effect in saved kilowatt hours, they decided to take their initiative a step further and added a 144-panel solar carport. Together, solar power and cool roofs are cost-beneficial steps that they recommend should be seriously considered by all California businesses.

Teaming up to save even more

In addition to their solar-powered system, they took additional steps to promote the company's energy conservation goals. First, they started an energy czar program with employees. They broke up each department into teams and challenged each team to reduce their energy consumption. Everyday before closing, employees turned off their monitors and any appliance that didn't need to be left on overnight. In addition, they made a conscious effort to only purchase ENERGY STAR certified appliances. As of the end of the competition, 80 percent of the appliances met EPA criteria for superior energy performance.

By working together to conserve energy and purchasing only energy-efficient equipment, the energy team bolstered the savings already produced by the solar system. But they're not stopping to rest on their laurels. They're currently retrofitting the lighting in the building to continue working toward greater energy efficiency.