



PRESS RELEASE

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Poway Unified Honored by SDG&E as Energy Champion

On May 13 at the 9th Annual San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) [Energy Showcase](#) event, Poway Unified was honored by SDG&E as an Energy Champion for its outstanding results in energy efficiency and conservation.

For PUSD, energy efficiency was born out of fiscal need. According to Michael Tarantino, Director of Facilities, Maintenance and Operations for PUSD, "Facing reduced education budgets, the District saw lowering its energy costs as a powerful way to keep dollars focused on education. While the budget crisis has subsided, continued efficiencies are still important. The District continues to steadily reduce its use and has kept energy costs at the same level over the past six years, despite opening three new schools. "Poway Unified School District's methodical approach to energy efficiency has been incredibly effective," notes SDG&E Account Executive Segment Supervisor Robert Maderazo. "They just chip away at it, and the results speak for themselves."

Poway Unified takes a common sense approach to energy efficiency. The District started with projects that were easy to implement and had significant returns. As a result, HVAC upgrades, lighting retrofits, and system controls were at the top of the list. The District has learned that the little things add up. For one school this meant two new chillers and boilers, as well as school-wide HVAC controls. At another, HVAC retrofits included 138 air handlers, new ducting, and the addition of controls, as well as classroom and gym lighting upgrades. The District also plans to use Prop 39 monies to change parking lot lighting to LEDs. Only when optimal efficiency has been achieved at a school site does the District begin to look at renewable power options. "We take the approach of getting the site as efficient as possible before adding things like solar," says Tarantino. "We don't want to cover inefficiencies with a renewable source."

Because of the hot, dry Southern California climate, solar is the go-to renewable for PUSD. The District currently has photovoltaic arrays on six schools and owns one array, which provides 50-60% of the power for that elementary school. The other five are under Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) in which a private vendor leases space on the school site, installs and maintains the arrays, and then sells that power to the school at a pre-determined price. This approach enables the District to avoid up-front installation costs, and removes the burden of management and maintenance from the facilities staff.

"Every year we see our customers continue to set the bar higher for energy savings and conservation, and the customers who have been recognized as Energy Champions this year have set an incredible example for all local businesses to follow," said Caroline Winn, vice president of customer services for SDG&E

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