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Energy savings start with choices galore

SET TO SAVE

Southern California Edison already offers rebates and incentives to help customers save on their electric bills. The Set to Save program in Palm Desert goes above and beyond Edison's existing discounts.

Windows: \$20 per foot of window for awnings or other shade covers, or 75 cents per square foot for window film.

Energy Star room air conditioner: \$75

Variable-speed pool pump: \$500

Air conditioning systems:

- 14 SEER: \$300
- 15 SEER: \$600
- 17 SEER: \$1,000

Ducts: \$100 for duct testing; \$500 for duct sealing

OFFICE OF ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Where: 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200A

When: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday

Phone: 837-0287 office; 674-3428 fax

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The Desert Sun
January 29, 2007

Palm Desert is on the leading edge of community energy initiatives and that starts with helping people save energy by learning about the options.

In addition to more energy-efficient air conditioners, another big energy saver - with a \$500 rebate - are variable-speed pool pumps.

"They use 80 percent less energy than the single-speed pumps that everyone has," said Patrick Conlon, Palm Desert's director of energy efficiency.

The full schedule of rebates and an online home energy audit are available on the Set to Save Web site, www.sce.com/rebatesandsavings/PalmDesert.

The retrofit program is one of the key elements of Palm Desert's five-year plan to cut energy use by 30 percent.

The city also passed a law in December requiring all new construction to be 10 percent to 15 percent more energy efficient than state standards.

Edison is funding the rebates for at least two years with \$14 million in state energy conservation funds, said Jim Hodge, the company's project manager for Palm Desert.

While Edison provides some rebate and discount programs for all its customers, the Palm Desert rebates up the ante with additional options, like the air conditioning and pool pump rebates.

"We want an environment where we want everyone wanting to do something," Hodge said.

And, if the program proves successful, Edison might extend the new rebates to other customers, said Steve Conroy, a company spokesman.

"If something is working in Palm Desert we'll obviously try to incorporate (it)," Conroy said.

About five residents have applied for rebates so far, Conlon said.

He expects even more when the city opens its Office of Energy Management on Monday. The office is run on city funds, with a total first-year budget of about \$500,000, Conlon said.

Conlon estimated the city has about 30,000 houses, apartments and condos.

The February edition of the city newsletter, The Bright Side, will also be targeted at boosting resident buy-in for the retrofit program.

Ginger Ofstedahl of Esser Air Conditioning and Heating in Cathedral City said a high-efficiency system will retail at \$4,000 to \$9,500.