

# Quality and Productivity Awards

Ceremony returns to honor those projects that save the City time, effort and funds.



Eleven projects involving 20 City departments, bureaus and divisions were honored for their excellence in efficiency at an awards ceremony Oct. 14. The Quality and Productivity Awards, produced by the City's Quality and Productivity Commission, was held at in the City Council Chambers in City Hall. The annual event was not held last year due to budget constraints. The event honors selected City Departments and workers that have demonstrated superior quality, productivity and efficiency in their operations and programs. This year, the focus is on drawing attention to projects that save money and set an example of how to do more with less.

Commission President Ron Galperin presented certificates of recognition to 2011's most notable and award-winning projects – and to their employee team members. The winning projects collectively resulted in millions of dollars in much-needed savings. Publicly recognizing these unique projects, and some 150 City workers who made them happen, were members of the City Council and its Audits & Governmental Efficiency Committee, including Chair Dennis Zine.

Many of these projects were self-initiated by frontline employees who sometimes spend years developing an idea into reality. Projects this year include utility- and maintenance-saving initiatives, consolidations, administrative cost-cutting measures, waste-to-energy pilots, and efficient use of interns.

"Our Commission is proud to recognize and honor employees in our City who are innovating and doing exceptional work," said Commission President Galperin. "Now more than ever, we need to encourage, assist and honor quality and productivity in Los Angeles City government. In these tougher times, it is vital that the City 'tighten its belt' – and we need to award those who set

an example of how to do more with less. The Commission is very pleased to call attention to projects that reflect forward-thinking, cost-savings, quality City services and teamwork."

The selection process consisted of the Commission's review of three dozen applications from departments Citywide, said Awards Committee Chairman and Commission Vice President, Ed Young. The Commissioners then conducted site visits of the semifinalists, followed by the final selection of the 11 projects that saved the City money, leveraged existing resources and/or enhanced customer service.

The City of Los Angeles Quality and Productivity Commission is a 15-member volunteer commission dedicated to improving the responsiveness, efficiency, and quality of services delivered by the City of Los Angeles to the public. For more information visit: [www.quality.lacity.org](http://www.quality.lacity.org).

*Special thanks to Michael Chee, award recipient, Club Member, and Ron Galperin, President, Quality and Productivity Commission, for their assistance.*

## The Winners – Administrative and Management Projects

### Redesign of the CDD Human Services Delivery System into the FamilySource Program

CDD

The Community Development Dept. consolidated three of five Human Services programs into the FamilySource program, resulting in efficiencies and enhanced customer service. The CDD increased the number of residents served with no additional revenues. Participating families were helped to increase their incomes collectively by \$17.3 million, and more than 2,700 youths participated in the Increased Academic Achievement Program. The cost savings from consolidation total more than \$1.6 million annually.

### Early Retiree Reinsurance Program

LACERS

The Early Retiree Reinsurance Program is a Federal program that reimburses a portion of medical claims for early retirees and their dependents. LACERS' participation in this program allowed them to receive \$3.8 million in first-round reimbursements. LACERS will be able to request additional reimbursements in the future. This project illustrates nimble and effective management and their ability to adapt to meet new opportunities that benefit City employees. LACER estimates that approximately \$2.6 million will be applied toward lowering medical subsidy cost with the remainder of the \$3.8 million applied to offset member premium costs.

### Stamping Out the Cost of Postage

City Attorney  
General Services/Mail Services  
General Services/Facilities Management

The introduction of educational seminars centered on postage has encouraged departments to revise methods of mail preparation. The training provides information on mailing criteria, improved methods of mail preparation, the adoption of automation technology, compliance with government requirements and the application of best practices. By providing citywide mail training to the Departments, this General Services project, in cooperation with representatives from the City Attorney's Office have helped the City save \$1 million in postage cost per year.

### Emergency Management Intern Program

Emergency Management

Through this project, Emergency Management found a creative approach to train young professionals in the Department's areas of operations, as well as tackling budget and staffing challenges. The internship program offers students and graduates experience in emergency planning, operations, communications, and community preparedness. EMD has been able to reach emergency management goals and meet local, state, and federal requirements in an extremely cost-effective manner. Interns have collectively contributed 1,500 hours of work time to the EMD. The donated time has so far resulted in a savings of at least \$35,000, but the benefit to all Angelenos has been priceless.



The team from the "Emergency Management Intern Program" collects its certificate.



## The Winners – Environmental Projects

### LED Street Light Energy Efficiency Program

*Office of the Mayor  
Public Works/Street Lighting  
DWP/Non-Residential Energy Efficiency Programs*

This project exemplifies the benefits of cooperation. The DWP provided the financial backing that included rebates and loans. Public Works/Street Lighting's New Technology Group spearheaded the use of LED for civic projects. And, the Mayor's Office coordinated this five-year plan centered on adopting new technologies and improving efficiency. The City has converted 45,000 streetlights to LED and will replace 140,000 existing streetlight fixtures in the City with LED units. Using LED units to replace current incandescent lamps will generate energy savings of 40 percent, which will translate into annual cost savings of \$1.6 million for the next seven years as DWP's loan is repaid. Thereafter, the City will realize \$10 million annually in savings.



The team from the "LED Street Light Energy Efficiency Program" collects its certificate.

### Journey to Be Green Turns Gold

*Los Angeles Convention Center*

Through extensive retrofitting and the implementation of measures to conserve energy and natural resources, the Convention Center achieved the Leadership in Environment and Energy Design for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) Gold certification. LACC became the largest convention center in the nation to reach this milestone. Changes including increased usage of renewable energy and upgrading of lighting units not only benefit the Los Angeles environment, but have helped the Convention Center hold utility bills flat despite significant rate increases. Air conditioning efficiency improved 38 percent, urinal replacements have saved 75,000 gallons of water annually, and new lighting units yield a 50 percent reduction in electrical use.

### Keeping it Cool

*Information Technology Agency/Network Engineering  
General Services/Building Maintenance  
General Services/Management Information Systems*

Through this project, General Services, in coordination with ITA, implemented a Building Automation Systems program – a state-of-the-art system that allows General Services personnel to remotely monitor, diagnose, and troubleshoot HVAC systems and to better optimize energy usage. The result is an exponential increase in efficiency in operations and responsiveness. Now air conditioning mechanics are able to diagnose and troubleshoot from afar instead of driving to the facilities for each individual request. Estimated energy savings for the City are \$1.1 million annually, plus another \$300,000 in annual employee time savings.

### Elmer Avenue Green Street Project

*Public Works/Street Services  
Public Works/Sanitation*

Public Works/Street Services and /Sanitation installed new sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and catch basins along Elmer Avenue. The improvements resulted in multiple benefits for residents of this Sun Valley community, including increased local water supplies, improved water quality, reduced flood impacts, increased native habitat, and an enhanced quality of life. The collaboration between City Departments, the Council office, residents, nonprofits, the San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council, and the California Dept. of Water Resources demonstrates the work that can be done through cooperation. The project cost \$2.5 million; an independent study indicated the potential cost benefits in the range of \$10 to \$12 million.

### Fats, Oils and Grease Digestion Pilot Project at the Hyperion Treatment Plant

*Public Works/Engineering  
Public Works/Sanitation*

The F.O.G. Digestion Pilot Project is a combination of maximizing resources, environmental stewardship, and reducing costs. This program involves private trucks collecting fats, oils, and greases from select local restaurants and delivering them to Sanitation's Hyperion Plant. There, the F.O.G. is processed to yield methane (biogas) formed in the anaerobic process brought on by the digestion of the waste by microorganisms. The biogas is then converted to electricity by the DWP. To date, 10 million standard cubic feet of biogas have been converted into 580,000 KWh of electricity, the equivalent of powering nearly 50 homes for a year. This program exemplifies powerful thinking, and with full adoption, annual savings could reach an estimated \$2.9 million annually, along with cleaner sewers and less F.O.G. in our landfills.

### Addressing Sewer Odors While Saving Money

*Public Works/Sanitation  
Public Works/Engineering*

The Bureaus of Sanitation and Engineering collaborated to address a lawsuit against the City of Los Angeles regarding sewer odors. An agreed-upon settlement of the litigation called for construction of seven air treatment facilities (ATFs) at an originally estimated total cost of \$45 million. That estimate later ballooned to \$85 million. The City's Bureaus decided to look for cheaper alternatives and developed a proposed revision to the settlement, one that was very much cheaper, easier, and accepted by the litigants. In lieu of all the new ATFs, the Bureau will instead be improved trap maintenance holes, upsizing current air scrubbers, manipulating sewage flow within the system and modifying current dampeners to control air movement. These methods are anticipated to work as well, if not better, than ATFs and will result in savings of \$12 million for each ATF not built. The initiative taken by the Bureau to revisit the original settlement – and to offer even better alternatives – has the potential to save tens of millions of dollars in construction costs, plus lower sewer trap maintenance costs, and cleaner and better air for us all.



The team from the "Addressing Sewer Odors While Saving Money" project collects its certificate.

### Lopez Canyon Environmental Center

*Public Works/Construction and Maintenance  
Public Works/Sanitation*

The Lopez Canyon Environmental Center is a 10-acre composting facility owned and operated by the City of Los Angeles in Lakeview Terrace. The site takes in 85 tons weekly of horse manure, along with household yard trimmings and woody material that is converted to compost made available free to residents. This program, however, has been designed to generate fees from waste haulers, and soon the Bureau anticipates packaging and selling bags of fertilizer in local nurseries, generating an extra \$60,000 per year and, literally turning waste into cash.



The team from the "Lopez Canyon Environmental Center" collects its certificate.