



School Dist:.....Monroe  
Project Type:.....Lighting Retrofit  
Stimulus Funds: ...\$37,929  
Savings/yr: .....\$2,573

## It takes a community...



In 2007, Monroe School District Superintendent Randy Crowson decided to involve the

community directly in facility planning. The district buildings were old and aging quickly. The budget was limited. It was going to take the community of 860 to tackle the challenge of planning school buildings for the future.

Crowson called five residents—an electrician, a carpenter, three business owners—and two school board members to engage

them. He found a willing group of individuals.

They met informally several times. They toured the district's three school buildings: a high school, elementary school, and a shop building. They studied the energy audit performed by a professional engineering firm to comply with Senate Bill 1149.\* After they completed all the ground work, they began to compile a "wish list" for Monroe School District.

"We have a pretty conservative budget and spend our money wisely. We had done some big projects with our 1149 funds such as upgrading

*\* The Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 1149 that went into effect on March 1, 2002. It provides that PGE and Pacific Power must collect a public-purpose charge from consumers within their service areas that is equal to 3 percent of the total revenues from electricity services. Ten percent of these public purpose funds must go towards energy efficiency efforts in the public schools within their service areas. Monroe School District is in Pacific Power service territory and has been receiving a portion of the public purpose funds each year since 2002. The Oregon Department of Energy, in cooperation with the Education Service Districts in the state, facilitates the funds.*

the HVAC system," said Crowson. "We saw an immediate reduction in our energy use of \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year. But, there was more to do. I estimate we had about \$2 million in additional projects on the list." The entire Monroe School budget is \$5 million per year.

Crowson and committee prioritized their wish list and decided to test their patience. Working with the school board, he used their annual 1149 funds, limited maintenance funds, Business Energy Tax Credit pass-through funds, and any grants that came along to proceed down the list and mix and match funding to get projects implemented. Monroe also has a construction excise tax, a one-time assessment on new construction in the town that is earmarked for school maintenance projects

"We've gone down the list more quickly than I expected," Crowson said, "thanks in part to the Recovery Act money that became available this year."

The Oregon Department of Energy issued a solicitation in March 2010 for lighting-only projects using American Recovery and Reinvestment (stimulus) funds that gave preference to public school buildings.

Crowson had a lighting project on the list. Monroe High School, built in 1928 with a wing and a separate shop building added in the 70s and a gym and cafeteria added in the 90s, needed new lights. The project met the criteria and the Oregon Department of Energy awarded the district \$37,929 of stimulus funds through its State Energy Plan.

The lighting retrofit project was completed on June 15 and called for high-performance ballasts and premium T-8 lamps to replace 232 inefficient T-12 lamps. The project is expected to reduce energy use from 82 Watts per fixture to 55 Watts per fixture with no reduction in light level. Savings are estimated to be \$2,573 per year.

The district contracted with Burrell Brothers Electric in Springfield. KW Electric in Creswell supplied the lamps and ballasts. Allied Waste of

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- Randy Crowson  
Superintendent



Salem disposed of the old fixtures and lamps. The results of the projects were well-received. "The kids were as excited as we were," Crowson said.

Before the project, lighting was yellow and dim. Now the lights are white and all areas of the



**Monroe School District Superintendent Randy Crowson is pleased with new energy efficient lights including those installed in his office.**

classrooms and hallways are well lit. The shop building was especially noticeable. Shop class is very popular and the teacher has numerous projects, including building electric cars, that has the students engaged. According to Crowson, the previous fixtures were 8-foot long and took 20 minutes to warm up. The new fixtures are a big improvement.

Crowson knows the community is closely monitoring the facility projects. The track was in need of resurfacing so the community held a fundraiser.

A few years ago, he had old windows on the West side of the high school facing the main road replaced with energy-efficient windows. When the contractor primed the new window casement with a noticeable mustard green color, his phone started ringing off the hook asking why he was painting them such an awful color. He had to assure the callers that it "was just the prime coat." He wasn't changing the color! He used the opportunity to update the callers about the window replacement project and all were pleased.

Crowson is in his 6<sup>th</sup> year as superintendent. After serving as a teacher and principal of Monroe elementary for four years, Crowson took a 20-year leave while he managed the family farm in Monroe and raised his kids. His wife is a long-term special education teacher with the district.

"This is my home," said Crowson. "We are part of this community."

And, it's the community that is making the difference for the future of the school district in this rural Oregon town.



OREGON  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENERGY

## **Oregon Department of Energy's Schools Team can assist your school district**

Schools spend more on energy than any other expense except personnel according to the US Department of Energy. Federal studies show that, regardless of the school age, administrators can effectively manage their energy use and reduce energy expenses by up to 20 percent.

The Oregon Department of Energy has a Schools Team that is available to assist Oregon schools with access available funding to implement energy-efficiency projects.

Contact the Oregon Department of Energy at (503) 378-4040 or toll-free at 1-800-221-8035 and ask for the Schools Team.

The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) awarded this energy project with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (stimulus) funds through the State Energy Program. These funds are designated for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The U.S. Department of Energy administers the funds, approves the projects and reviews the state's progress. The Oregon Department of Energy has \$42.1 million in SEP funding. All projects must be completed by February 15, 2012.

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