



Energy upgrades help Harford County 4-H club raise \$4,600 in annual savings

This isn't your grandfather's 4-H club. Sure, agricultural activities remain among the focus areas for members of the nation's largest youth development organization. But today's 5- to 18-year-old 4-H members study everything from food science and photography to creative writing and robotics.

Just as the programming has evolved to meet the changing needs of young people, so has the operation of the non-profit's facilities. The Harford County 4-H Camp and Deer Creek Overlook in Street, Maryland, recently completed a series of upgrades that not only improved the facility's energy efficiency and aesthetic appeal but also are helping the club save thousands annually on energy costs.

The opportunity

Located about an hour northeast of Baltimore near Rocks State Park, the Harford County 4-H Camp is nestled within 184 wooded acres along Deer Creek. The property was acquired in 1925 with funds raised by determined 4-Hers selling chickens to their neighbors in the early 1920s.

Today, Maryland's oldest 4-H camp is run by a volunteer board of directors committed to operating the facility as efficiently as possible. One way the summer camp pays the bills is by pulling double duty as a rental venue for hosting weddings, conferences and other events.

"Non-profits that don't receive state or local funding have to be resourceful," says DeeDee McCann, a Harford County 4-H Camp board member. "Fundraisers vary from year to year, and rental revenues can ebb and flow. Finding ways to save money is the only way to keep the doors open."

Structures on the site include Deer Creek Overlook—a multipurpose building and dining hall with seating for up to 290 guests—as well as Rocks Lodge, a caretaker home, dormitories, two pavilions and a swimming pool.

"Running the camp is expensive, especially in the summer," McCann says. "The electricity bills can be huge. That's why we reached out to BGE when we heard about the utility's energy efficiency programs."



**"By doing these
upgrades, we saved
money to sustain
our organization
and reinvest in other
projects that benefit
campers and renters."**

— DeeDee McCann,
board member,
Harford County 4-H Camp

The BGE solution

BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program® provides incentives for business customers, including non-profits, to install energy-efficient equipment and make other energy-saving upgrades. As it turns out, the Harford County 4-H Camp qualified for incentives to make upgrades at several buildings on the property, both indoors and outdoors.

Heating and cooling. BGE's Building Tune-up troubleshoots and fine-tunes electrical, mechanical and control systems to optimize energy performance. Although the camp's heat pumps were already 90% efficient, this service helped achieve even higher efficiency.

Lighting. The camp used available incentives to upgrade to LED lighting in the Craft Building and at Rocks Lodge. LEDs also were installed on the light poles located along the trails between buildings and leading to the pool.

Pool. The camp's pool is in use from mid-April to mid-September. The old pool pump and its 7.5-horsepower motor used to run 24/7. After the upgrades, a new 3-horsepower motor with a timer system reduces the pump's speed at night, saving energy and money.

The benefits

McCann says that she's pleased with the upgrades, citing the energy cost savings—to the tune of \$4,595 a year—as a top benefit. Thanks to the reduction in energy use, the projects paid for themselves in less than a year. And, she says, "We can take those savings and put the money into other upgrades around camp. Already we've updated the pool bathrooms and repaired the concrete flooring in Rocks Lodge, which was cracked and uneven. We also had the roads re-stoned throughout camp. We were able to do those improvements because we reduced our energy costs."

The new LEDs brighten up the old, wooden Craft Building to the benefit of the camp's young artists in training. The updated lighting also makes the property and its facilities more appealing to potential renters. McCann is now eyeing other opportunities to work with BGE, such as upgrading the lighting in the dorms.

"This is a worthwhile program," she adds. "All non-profits and businesses should look into it."

Savings at a glance

Harford County 4-H Camp took advantage of financial incentives from BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program to complete an HVAC tune-up, upgrade to LED lighting and install an energy-efficient pool pump.

BGE program:
**Building Tune-up, Energy
Solutions for Business,
Small Business Energy
Solutions and Small
Business Energy Advance**

Total project cost:
\$19,218

Electricity savings:
35,346 kWh/year

Incentives paid:
\$15,032

Cost savings:
\$4,595/year

Cost to the customer:
\$4,185

Payback:
Less than 1 year



The Energy Solutions for Business Program provides financial incentives and technical assistance to help businesses and non-profit organizations maximize energy efficiency and reduce costs. Financial incentives cover up to 50% of the cost for retrofit projects and up to 75% of the incremental cost for new construction and replacement of end-of-life equipment. For more information, visit [BGESmartEnergy.com](https://www.BGESmartEnergy.com).

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