



Pet Depot Barks Up the Right Tree with Its Second Lighting Upgrade Project

It is said that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. But, when learned behaviors offer big rewards, they're worth repeating! Such was the case for Dan Lyons, co-owner of Pet Depot in Timonium and two-time participant in BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program®.

The family-owned business first took advantage of BGE incentives several years ago to upgrade the lighting in the 7,500-square-foot pet food and supplies store. Since then, both the pet care industry and lighting technology have made significant advancements. Pet Depot now houses one of the area's only hydrotherapy pools, which helps dogs recover from surgeries and other ailments, while lighting options are now even more energy efficient, so businesses can save more on energy costs.

The Opportunity

When Lyons first participated in BGE's Small Business Energy Solutions Program, he says he was happy with the way the new lighting made his store brighter and reduced his energy use. However, since that time, LED technology has far surpassed the CFLs that he had installed earlier.

"About 30% of the lights needed to be replaced," says Lyons. "The cost of replacing those bulbs would have been far more than what the project cost me."

Instead of simply replacing the CFLs, Lyons reached out to BGE and found that he was eligible to participate in the program a second time. BGE energy efficiency experts explained how upgrading to LED lighting could help Pet Depot save over 119,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year.

"Anyone who hasn't participated in BGE's programs yet just doesn't realize how much money they're missing out on saving."

— Dan Lyons,
 Co-Owner,
 Pet Depot

Savings at a Glance

Pet Depot in Timonium became a two-time participant in BGE's Small Business Energy Solutions Program, receiving financial incentives to update the lighting in its store.

BGE program:	Small Business Energy Solutions
Total project cost:	\$10,643
Incentives paid:	\$8,387
Cost to the customer:	\$2,256
Electricity savings:	119,102 kWh/year
Cost savings:	\$2,483/year
Payback:	11 months



One successful lighting upgrade through BGE's Smart Energy Savers Program® led to another for this pet supply store in Timonium.



Changing bulbs over the hydrotherapy pool can be difficult. Longer-lasting LEDs reduce maintenance headaches and costs.



"I think every individual retailer needs to be cognizant of how to reduce costs in any way they can," says Lyons. "This way is a trifecta with improved store appearance, cost savings, and environmental benefits."

The BGE Solution

In only a few days, Pet Depot's lighting underwent a major overhaul. BGE contractors replaced outdated lighting within the store's nine-foot and 24-foot ceilings. All of the CFLs were switched to LEDs, including those that illuminate the hydrotherapy pool. Although the upgrades were completed during regular store hours, Lyons says there was no impact on daily operations.

"Nothing the BGE contractors did interfered with the activity in the store," says Lyons.

The Benefits

After the upgrades, Pet Depot customers now enjoy better quality lighting, while the owners enjoy monthly energy savings. "The improvement in light quality was night and day the first time around, but the way the merchandise looks with the LEDs now is incredible," says Lyons. And, with the help of more than \$8,000 in financial incentives for the project, the retailer was able to recoup its entire investment in less than a year.

Now, Lyons is eager to share his project success with other Maryland businesses.

"So many people don't realize this is a gift BGE wants to give you," says Lyons. "To recuperate your costs in less than a year is almost unheard of—but, once you recover that cost, you just keep saving. We've done it twice, and it's been flawless both times."

The BGE Small Business Energy Solutions Program is designed to help small business owners use energy more efficiently. The program includes an energy analysis and easy-to-follow recommendations for improving energy efficiency and full turnkey service to help you make energy efficiency part of your long-term business plan. Participating businesses can receive incentives that cover up to 70% of the total cost for most energy efficiency retrofit projects, including materials, labor and recycling. For more information, visit BGESmartEnergy.com.

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