

Sept. 10, 2014

**Richland County Receives Funding for Pilot Program to Conserve Energy**

As part of a pilot program to conserve energy, Richland County replaced fluorescent fixtures at one of its largest facilities with new technology.

A $5,000 grant from the South Carolina Energy Office and $8,900 in funding from the SCE&G Energy Wise program helped offset the cost to outfit the facility on Powell Road with light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures. Representatives from the state office and SCE&G attended Tuesday’s Richland County Council meeting for a check presentation.

“We believe, through research, that the LED lighting technology change will offer significant savings through power reduction, but first we must test these technologies to determine that they provide adequate illumination for our users and longevity for reducing maintenance costs,” said John Hixon, Director of the County’s Department of Support Services, which covers maintenance of County facilities. “Pilot programs like this allow us to make those evaluations through real-world use of the technology.”

The Public Works facility in Northeast Richland has one of the County’s larger energy footprints and is the first to be outfitted with LED technology. LED fixtures offer a higher quality light and greater longevity compared to traditional fixtures. In addition, the LED fixtures reduce energy consumption and lessen the need for maintenance costs, freeing up staff time. The LED fixtures also have a cooling multiplier in the warmer months that reduce the need for air conditioning as the lights give off little heat.

For the first quarter of the year, the County saw an average reduction of 15 percent in energy usage at the Powell Road facility.

In addition to the retrofit at Public Works, LED lights were installed in the administration area of the County’s Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center in Lower Richland. Through the SCE&G’s Energy Wise program, the County received an additional $1,850 for the project. The energy usage will be tracked for a full year to see if these results hold true year round.