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costs, reduce carbon footprint

Posted by Matt Rocheleau July 29, 2013 03:13 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

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During the past year, the city of Boston completed 23 energy-efficiency projects that will save the city about \$400,000 in yearly energy costs and will prevent the release of as much greenhouse gas as 270 homes emit on average each year, officials said.

The city said it also recently launched a system that allows municipal officials to track energy and water used by each of the city's 253 facilities, by traffic lights across 850 intersections and 64,000 street lights and by the city's fleet of

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“The City of Boston continues to do its part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while cutting our energy costs, saving taxpayer dollars and increasing our level of service to the community,” said a statement from Mayor Thomas M. Menino.

The efforts are part of Menino’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Boston by 25 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, city officials said.

“I am proud to report that city government is leading by example and is on

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The software will also allow the city to better plan future energy efficiency projects, to more quickly identify undesired spikes in energy use and manage energy use system-wide.

Twenty-three energy efficiency projects were completed during the year, which ended June 30. The projects will prevent more than one million carbon dioxide from being emitted each year, officials said.

The city also bought 28,000 wind-generated renewable energy certificates during the past fiscal year, a third more than the city bought during the fiscal year.

Renewable energy certificates, or credits, are sold by those who own or operate sources of renewable energy, like wind turbines and solar panels.

The credits are purchased as a way to encourage the production of renewable energy. Electric utilities are often required by law to buy such certificates that power from renewable energy generates a certain percentage of total sale.

The city began buying the credits seven years ago to help offset some of its greenhouse gas emissions. Each credit represents one megawatt hour of renewable electricity.

The amount of credits the city bought over the past fiscal year, all from the company Renewable Choice Energy, represents the equivalent of about 10 percent of the city’s annual electricity use, or about the same amount

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used by City Hall, the Central Library in Copley Square and the Boston Department headquarters combined.

The city's new Enterprise Energy Management System, or EEMS, re-launched through a contract with Schneider Electric, allows the city to monitor energy and water consumption and to spot opportunities for the city to further on energy and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The software will also allow the city to better plan future energy efficiency projects, to more quickly identify undesired spikes in energy use and manage energy use system-wide.

"While programs like Renew Boston and the new Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure ordinance are helping Boston residents and businesses greenovate, it is important that the public know that we are working to greenovate our own operations as well," said a statement from Briarcliff city's chief of environment and energy. "Initiatives like the energy reporting software and credit purchases will further help us move closer toward our 2020 and 2050 goals."

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