

[Albany Times Union](#)

Mayor a fan of energy program

John McDonald urges others to sign up for lighting upgrades, energy efficiency

<http://bit.ly/biJhr1>

By [LARRY RULISON](#), Business writer

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COHOES -- Cohoes Mayor John McDonald III has a lot of reasons to be a big believer in National Grid's new small-business-services program.

That's because he was able to get National Grid to pay for substantial amounts of new lighting upgrades at his family's business, Marra's Pharmacy in Cohoes, and at several city-owned buildings, including City Hall and the public library.

The changes, which included switching old, inefficient incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs and light-emitting diodes, are expected to save the city \$45,000 a year.

The project cost is \$125,000, but National Grid picked up most of the tab. The city's share will be repaid in a year and a half.

"It was as close to a no-brainer as you can get," McDonald said. "It's also benefitted us with respect to cash flow."

The program provides free energy audits and up to 70 percent of the costs of equipment and installation to small businesses and government offices that used 100 kilowatts of power or less.

It is part of the state's Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard, which is funded through a surcharge on utility bills. Up to \$85 million is expected to be available under the program across the state.

McDonald learned about it last fall when the city was going through an audit for another energy efficiency program administered by the New York Power Authority. It turns out, the National Grid program was more generous when it came to incentives for lighting. McDonald also signed up the pharmacy, which is expected to realize about \$3,000 a year in electricity savings.

"You can't beat this program," McDonald said.

The mayor is such a believer that on March 19 he wrote a letter to city business owners urging them to consider the National Grid program. It also includes no-interest financing for 24 months.

"The bottom line is that this is a program I strongly encourage you to consider no matter how small or large your business is," McDonald wrote.

Being a business owner, McDonald also knows that new lighting can improve the esthetics of the business.

"When you walk into a business, you judge it by its appearance," McDonald said. "Lighting is a very important part about how your business is perceived."

William Flaherty, National Grid's regional executive for its Eastern Division, said that 1,800 businesses and government agencies have participated in the program already throughout upstate New York, and he expects that as many as 30,000 in the Eastern Division alone could take advantage over the next 18 months.

"We'll go to any customer," Flaherty said.

[Troy Record](#)

VIDEO LINK: <http://bit.ly/cXgjIN>

Cohoes Set to Save with Fixtures

The City of Cohoes will spend about \$40,000 on equipment which will save the city about \$34,000 annually. Five city-operated facilities are getting the new lights, including the library. The installations were done through a National Grid program. With it, small businesses and municipalities which use under 100KW can get the equipment for only 30 percent of the costs. (full text in print edition)

[WTEN Channel 10](#)

VIDEO LINK: <http://bit.ly/bNVaPn>

<http://bit.ly/bZkqKn>

New National Grid program saves local businesses money

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COHOES, N.Y. -- National Grid and the Mayor of Cohoes are spreading the word to local businesses about an energy-saving program which also saves money.

The "Small Business Energy Efficiency Program" uses National Grid contractors to conduct lighting and refrigeration assessments. National Grid covers up to 70% of the costs of the installation.

After completing upgrades in several city buildings, including his own pharmacy, Cohoes Mayor John McDonald sent a letter to all the small businesses in the city.

"We looked at it saying, 'Geez if it works for us why wouldn't it work for an average business owner?' And it this day in age, business owners, now more than ever need more assistance," Mayor McDonald told NEWS10.

The portion not discounted is to be covered by the business, but can be financed over a 24 month period.