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### Federal grant helps city improve energy efficiency

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Eager to invest in money- and energy-saving technology, city officials are using \$638,500 in "green" grant funds to purchase hybrid vehicles, install energy-efficient lighting at Pompey Park Athletic Field, outfit buildings with power-saving motion detectors and create a sustainability officer position in the city government.

"We're using the grant money to save the city money on a yearly basis," Sustainability Officer Rich Reade said. "Normally, this would be a 10-year payback, but we're projecting significant savings of \$15,000 this year."



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The city received its Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the federal government in September. Since then, \$235,250 has been used for the city building retrofitting program, \$217,750 is planned for Pompey Park's lighting initiatives and \$69,680 will be used for the sustainability officer position. The remaining \$115,820 is being spent on power-saving motion detectors, T-8 lighting and a fleet of hybrid vehicles to be used by city staff.

At [Delray Beach](#) City Hall, electricity costs fell by 10 percent last year, a savings made possible by retrofitting lighting fixtures with energy-efficient bulbs, turning off lights that weren't needed and installing motion detectors to shut off lights. In addition, the city clerk and the finance, police and fire departments are using paperless processes. The changes were inspired by a list of 120 ideas that was produced by the city's Green Task Force. Reade said 70 of those ideas have been implemented or are planned for

future implementation.

Reade's computer screensaver reminds him every day of the importance of sustainability, a vision he's championed during his short tenure at the city. "It says: 'Meeting the needs of the current generation while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' That's most important," Reade said. "That's why I have it, and it's something I strive for in this position."

But it's not just about being green. Reade said it's also important that the city stays on a path that is financially and economically sustainable.

In addition to the energy-saving measures it has funded, the grant has helped to encourage water conservation in the city. Reade, along with Richard Hasko, the city's director of environmental services, and Victor Majtenyi, deputy director of public utilities, are working to reduce potable water needs, use reclaimed water for landscaping when appropriate and implement a concept known as the inverted rate system that offers alternative sources and reduces water permitting needs.

"We're doing a lot of pilot projects," Reade said. "Our goal is to change the culture and see how it works."

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