

# 2009 Annual Report



*Using Energy Efficiency as the First Step Toward  
Energy Independence for the Ventura County Region*

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VCREA IS A JOINT POWERS AGENCY (JPA) COMPOSED OF PUBLIC AGENCIES WORKING IN COLLABORATION TO ADDRESS THE AVAILABILITY, RELIABILITY, CONSERVATION AND INNOVATIVE USE OF ENERGY RESOURCES IN THE VENTURA COUNTY REGION. EACH AGENCY APPOINTS A REPRESENTATIVE BOARD MEMBER AND ALTERNATE TO SERVE ON THE VCREA BOARD. QUARTERLY BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD IN JANUARY, APRIL, JULY AND OCTOBER ON THE THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH; MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. MEMBERSHIP MAY BE EXPANDED AT ANY TIME TO INCLUDE NEW PUBLIC AGENCY MEMBERS WITH SHARED INTERESTS AND POWERS IN COMMON.

## **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Technical Advisory Council (TAC) provides a valuable public/private partnership connection to VCREA and lends essential technical and business support to the Board and Staff. TAC Member appointments are based on their skills and background with public agencies; utility and business partners; research or education; and general energy interest and willingness to serve. TAC meets three times a year and is "on-call" to assist in strategic planning and long-term projects. During 2009, TAC focused on developing VCREA as a regional energy planning office, raising the visibility of the organization through connections to business conferences, and helping to form innovative regional proposals for submission to potential energy stimulus grants and other energy funds.

Nan Drake  
Janet Gagnon  
Rudy Gonzales/Nancy Williams  
Poul Hanson  
Dan Hardy  
Michael Lind  
Doug Nelson  
Tom Nielsen  
Michelle Pettes  
Wayne Tanaka  
Tom Umenhofer  
Mike Villegas

Harrison Industries  
SolarWorld Ind.  
Southern California Edison  
Ventura County Office of Education  
Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura  
REC Solar Inc.  
MainStreet Architects  
Energy Systems, Inc.  
Southern California Gas Company  
Tanaka Associates  
NRG, LLC  
Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

## **YEAR IN REVIEW**

### **ROLE AS A REGIONAL ENERGY PLANNING OFFICE**

Having a regional energy planning office available to track opportunities and lend technical support helped position Ventura County cities, public agencies and non-profit organizations to access and utilize energy efficiency funds that have become available this year via federal energy stimulus funds. VCREA has been directly involved by providing technical support, identifying projects and suitable funds, and preparing the region to participate in numerous "green programs".

### **RECOGNIZED TECHNICAL SUPPORT PRESENTATIONS**

- ◆ VCREA participated as an invited speaker in two national conferences this past year. The themes for the Partners in Smart Growth Conference held in Albuquerque and the American Council of Energy Efficiency Engineers Conference held in Long Beach included case studies from VCREA to help communities across the country learn how to leverage scarce resources and work through regional collaboration.
- ◆ VCREA was joined by representatives from the City of Oxnard, Kennedy Jenks Engineering and Mainstreet Architects to provide a session to the 2009 Municipal Green Building Conference and Expo in Los Angeles to report on the newly constructed and LEED gold awarded wastewater treatment facility operated by the City of Oxnard.
- ◆ VCREA staff provided valuable training to more than 100 professionals seeking LEED certification through a series of evening study sessions that will have long-term benefits towards "growing our own" energy professionals.

### **LENDING SUPPORT TO ENERGY STIMULUS FUNDED PROJECTS**

- ◆ Upon request, VCREA provided energy planning support to help cities, school districts and non profit organizations throughout Ventura County identify and develop projects, calculate energy savings and compete for funds designated for energy efficient facility improvements, green job education and economic development projects.
- ◆ Federal and State Energy Efficiency Block Grant programs for public agencies encouraged greater collaboration among all 10 cities and the County of Ventura. VCREA provided technical support that included project proposals and feasibility analysis as required by applicants for the funds expected in 2009 through 2010.
- ◆ VCREA supported the local cities and county in the development of a county-wide energy finance district plan that will allow residential and commercial property owners to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on the property tax bill. Through a joint government effort, a voluntary program has been funded by an energy stimulus grant and is expected to roll out in 2010. VCREA will provide marketing and education for the program, directing participants and contractors to utility rebates and tax incentives that can further reduce the cost of planned retrofits and improvements.

## **THE VENTURA COUNTY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

The Ventura County Partnership Program is funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by Southern California Gas Company (SCG) and Southern California Edison (SCE), in partnership with Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance (VCREA), under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission for the purpose of advancing energy efficiencies in public agencies.

The 2009 Bridge Funded Year marked a stand alone year for the partnership to focus on retrofitting buildings operated by public agencies and non-profit organizations, while details of the 2010 - 2012 program were developed to support a state-wide strategic plan for even greater energy efficiencies.

The Partnership Program lends support to public agency retrofit projects to reduce energy use in schools, libraries, public housing authorities, public works operations and non-profit community asset organizations. The program goals include developing an *energy efficiency ethic* as an essential first-step toward changing behaviors to compliment building, operations and hardware upgrades.

VCREA is responsible for the day-to-day operations of a local energy efficiency clearinghouse office, website, training seminars, project identification, technical project support and energy planning. VCREA works to identify best available technology and new product information, enhance maintenance and operations, lend support for contract and bid documents, verify that facilities have installed improvements and their energy consumption has been reduced.

The Partnership Program also provides residential and small business utility customers with a direct link to dozens of energy rebates, training programs and customer programs such as SCE Holiday LED Light Strand Exchange and the SCE Household Lamp Exchange programs to introduce new technology in everyday fixtures.

### **2009 VENTURA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- ◆ 15 Technical training seminars benefitting approximately 800 individuals; 14 Community Events reached approximately 12,000.
- ◆ 6 Bi-monthly Newsletters in print and electronic formats, and operation of informational website.
- ◆ 7 Public agencies/organizations received almost \$300,000 in incentive funds.
- ◆ Marketing and information outreach to 18 kiosks located at Libraries, Chambers of Commerce, and City Halls.
- ◆ Small Measure Initiatives to install new LED Exit Lights and Vending Machine Controllers captured over 212,500 kWh savings.

**PUBLIC AGENCY ENERGY PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS**

Thanks to the efforts of many individuals working on behalf of their organizations, VCREA was able to assist in the implementation of 23 energy efficiency projects for the 2009 calendar year. The projects resulted in a combined savings of more than 1.6 million kWh, or the equivalent of 283 households using about 6,000 kWh per year. Dollar-wise, these projects have reduced annual utility costs to public agencies by about \$225,000.

- ◆ Ventura Unified School District and the County of Ventura reduced energy use of their large chiller plant air conditioning systems. "State-of-the-art" control systems, as well as hardware upgrades, reduced the energy use of these chiller plants by as much as 50%.
- ◆ Projects with the cities of Port Hueneme and Thousand Oaks, and the County of Ventura addressed improvements in pumping and fan systems.
- ◆ In the realm of lighting, VCREA encouraged the use of new outdoor lighting and control technology for building exteriors and parking lots. These systems will reduce energy use by 50-75%.

Constrained budgets limited work among many public agencies. However, VCREA closed out the year by working directly with the County of Ventura and the cities of Fillmore, Ojai, Port Hueneme and Santa Paula to identify an additional 40+ projects that will be undertaken in 2010-11 to reduce the energy costs on public facilities using federal energy stimulus funds. Projects anticipated to be undertaken include new interior lighting, exterior building lighting and parking lot light fixtures, and replacement of aged, malfunctioning and inefficient heat and air conditioning systems. These infrastructure improvements will pay dividends by reducing energy consumption and maintenance costs so scarce funds can be focused on essential public health, safety and community services.

**MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*The year 2009 passed as one of the financially toughest in recent memory. Leaders from all sectors of our community including schools, businesses and local governments, to corporate partners and the agricultural industry seemed to be seeking answers to the same operational questions: where are the opportunities to reduce costs, operate as efficiently and effectively as possible, and how can economic stability be regained.*

*VCREA was formed to be a reliable resource of energy efficiency information, project identification and long-term energy planning. The difficulties of 2009 provided the opportunity to more fully rollout the services of a regional energy planning office. It has been gratifying to support facility managers and property owners seeking energy efficiencies to help steady their own budgets and reduce energy consumption.*

*And, to the credit of our shared community spirit, numerous organizations, employee groups and schools have added energy efficiency to their mission. Innovative programs and changing behaviors are positioning the region to actively participate in education, job and career programs. New programs are focused on energy research, marketing, finance and installation of advanced energy saving and renewable technologies---all part of the green economy.*

*Look to VCREA as a local energy resource that can help support public, business and community efforts to reach greater energy efficiency and to make our communities more sustainable places to live and work.*

*Cheryl Collart, VCREA Executive Director*

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**THE VCREA MISSION IS TO ESTABLISH VENTURA COUNTY, ITS COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS AS THE LEADER IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING DURABLE, SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT SENSIBLE GROWTH, HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY, ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE AND GREATER SELF-RELIANCE FOR THE REGION BY (1) REDUCING ENERGY DEMAND AND INCREASING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND (2) ADVANCING THE USE OF CLEAN, EFFICIENT AND RENEWABLE LOCAL RESOURCES.**