

Guidance on Energy Efficiency Business Case for Wastewater Pumping Systems for ARRA Green Project Reserve

Modifications, retrofits or replacement of existing wastewater pumping systems that achieve a 20% increase in energy efficiency will categorically qualify for the Green Project Reserve (GPR) required by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). Projects that do not achieve a 20 percent increase in energy efficiency can also count towards the GPR if they have a business case showing how the project significantly improves energy efficiency. Information to be included in a business case for wastewater pumping stations is provided below.

Business cases for wastewater pumping systems must include information that demonstrates that energy efficiency is the primary goal of the project. They should clearly show that: 1) the most energy efficient equipment is being used in the project, 2) that energy efficient design and operational considerations and practices are followed, 3) the percent increase in energy efficiency and KWH saved, and 4) why further energy efficiency improvements cannot be achieved.

1) Energy Efficient Equipment

The business case shall demonstrate that selected equipment is of the highest efficiency suitable for the project. The following are examples of standards or guidelines to be met:

- Selection of new or replacement electrical equipment should meet or exceed energy efficiency standards set forth by professional engineering and manufacturers associations such as the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA).
- If it is not possible to select new electrical equipment that can meet or exceed energy efficiency standards then applicants must provide acceptable evidence of why this could not be achieved, with rationale for selecting alternate equipment if the goal of energy efficiency is to be achieved.

2) Energy Efficient Design Practices and Considerations

The business case shall demonstrate that all energy efficient design practices and considerations suitable for the project were used. The following are general examples of design considerations where energy efficiency could be demonstrated:

- Pumping systems should be designed to operate in their most efficient zone. Pumps should be selected to operate close to the Best Efficiency Point (BEP) on a pump curve defined as the point with maximum efficiency of the pump. Choose pumps that result in the lowest friction head loss and ensure that pumps are properly sized for the pumping system.
- Pumping systems should be designed to reduce flows to be pumped where possible.
- Reduce pipe friction and lower head losses to reduce the energy needed for pumping. Note that repair and replacement of the collection system piping does not qualify as “green” except in the most dramatic infiltration/inflow cases.

- Where appropriate for energy efficiency purposes, use distributed control systems to operate the most efficient combination of pumps, and at the proper pump speeds, for needed flow rates and pressures.

3) Energy Savings

Comparing the energy requirements of the existing system with the energy requirements of the proposed upgrades yields the increase in energy efficiency. Business cases for energy efficient wastewater pumping projects should calculate the increase in energy efficiency as follows:

$$\frac{\text{kWh/year used prior to the upgrade} - \text{kWh/year used after the upgrade}}{\text{kWh/year used prior to the upgrade}}$$

The answer is expressed as a percentage improvement. The business case should clearly report the kWh/year saved by the project.

4) Energy Saving Justification

Business cases that demonstrate significant energy efficiency improvements will utilize all practical opportunities to improve energy efficiency. Consequently, each business case should discuss why the project cannot achieve a higher level of energy efficiency. One possible answer is that prior energy efficiency improvements have elevated the operation to a point where the remaining gains represent a smaller improvement.