Top nursery picks LEDs for wattsmart upgrade

Fall harvest keeps 500 workers busy at Sierra-Cascade Nursery’s ranch in Tulelake, California. They’re processing the nursery’s bare-root strawberry plants to supply fruit growers across the United States, Mexico and other parts of the globe.

The workers rate, trim and package the stock. Good lighting is critical to the job.

“It’s really important people can see the plants,” said Vice President of Operations John Wells. “They’re making split-second decisions on grade and quality.”

However, the outdated lighting over the workstations wasn’t up to the task.

Wells’ dissatisfaction with the situation prompted a call to Pacific Power’s wattsmart® Business program for a solution. The program provides cash incentives and technical assistance for high-efficiency lighting, HVAC and other equipment upgrades.

High-bay LEDs: packed with advantages

Sierra-Cascade grows berry stock on a total of 6,400 acres in five locations, making it one of the largest nursery operations of its kind in the world. The company has built a strong reputation for providing the highest quality products using the most sustainable practices available.

Wells said the results of an earlier small lighting upgrade got them looking to make the change at the Tulelake site.

With help from wattsmart Business, Sierra-Cascade upgraded the 400-watt metal halide and T12 fluorescent lighting in the production and packing areas to highly efficient 256-watt, high-bay LED lighting. Similar metal halide lighting in the operation’s cooler room also replaced high-bay LEDs.

LEDs provide superior energy efficiency and long operating life. For Sierra-Cascade, LEDs offer other key advantages: they turn on instantly and have no restrike time delay.

Lower costs, higher productivity

The lighting upgrades at Sierra-Cascade Nursery are estimated to save nearly 80,650 kilowatt-hours a year in electricity and $10,740 in energy costs annually. The company earned a Pacific Power incentive of $7,700 for its energy-saving results.

Wells said the utility’s program made the difference in moving ahead with the project.

“We’re like anybody else – capital expenditures are scrutinized hard,” he said. “The assistance from Pacific Power made it affordable.”

This year’s harvest will be the first with the new lighting and Wells said the benefits of the improved work environment should be substantial.

“Take 500 people and increase their productivity just a percent or two – it’s huge.”

For more information, contact your business manager, call a participating vendor or visit bewattsmart.com.
Key account customers rank Pacific Power No. 1

Pacific Power regained the No. 1 position among U.S. electric utilities in TQS Research, Inc.'s 2015 Key Account National Benchmark for customer satisfaction.

Nearly all – 98.5 percent – of the 68 Pacific Power key account customers surveyed said they were very satisfied, ranking the company as the highest performing operating utility in the U.S. Pacific Power consistently has been among the top performing utilities.

“We are pleased that our largest customers recognize the efforts of our team to deliver exceptional customer service and help their organizations succeed,” said Stefan Bird, Pacific Power president and CEO. “We are committed to build on that trust and use their feedback to continue to improve and maintain best-in-class customer service.”

Pacific Power’s three sister utilities, Rocky Mountain Power, MidAmerican Energy and NV Energy, also ranked in the top 10 percent nationally, and combined, Berkshire Hathaway Energy ranked No. 1 among U.S. electric utility holding companies.

TQS Research, Inc. is an independent research firm that polls large commercial and industrial customers for overall satisfaction. The annual TQS benchmark survey of approximately 100 electric and electric/gas operating companies measures customer perception of performance in areas such as energy efficiency, account management, reliable power, price, handling customer contacts and company image.

In addition to measuring satisfaction among its large commercial and industrial customers, Pacific Power also participates in national third party administered customer satisfaction surveys among its residential customers and small businesses. These surveys provide great feedback for the company to identify areas of improvement to meet and exceed our customers’ expectations.

Technology improvements help the company prepare for storms to get people and materials to damaged areas more quickly.

Year-round planning softens season’s blow

In addition to performing regular operations and maintenance on its system, Pacific Power reviews and upgrades processes and protocols throughout the year to help the company prepare for and respond better to outages during the winter season.

“No matter what Mother Nature brings, our employees are dedicated to getting power back on for our customers as quickly and safely as possible,” said Mansfield.

Steps in advance minimize disruption

The company recommends businesses also prepare for storms and unexpected outages. Here are a few helpful tips:

- Develop and practice business continuity plans
- Mark the location of electrical supply panels and note how to turn off power
- Plug computers into surge protectors and install automatic backup programs
- Consider installing a backup generator for critical equipment (follow safety guidelines)
- Keep emergency lighting in working order
- Check and restock emergency supplies such as flashlights, food and water

Download Pacific Power’s mobile app and find out more at pacificpower.net/outage.
A recent study finds that integrating the two largest transmission grids in the West to create a regional ISO could produce significant cost savings and environmental benefits.

Customers benefit from grid coordination

PacifiCorp and the California Independent System Operator proved in 11 months the energy imbalance market they created manages system imbalances across regions better than the two entities can individually.

A report released in late October by the ISO demonstrates total gross benefits for participating utilities and their customers – including Pacific Power customers – for the first 11 months of EIM operations were $33.4 million.

Innovative solution lauded

PacifiCorp and the ISO launched the real-time energy market in November 2014 to effectively manage short-term fluctuations in energy supply and demand, reduce costs for customers and more effectively integrate renewable energy resources. The market uses a sophisticated system to automatically balance demand every five to 15 minutes with the lowest cost energy available across the combined grid.

PacifiCorp received a 2015 achievement award from the Utility Variable-Generation Integration Group for leadership in the design, development and deployment of the energy imbalance market with the ISO.

Study shows potential of regional integration

To further benefit customers, PacifiCorp and the ISO also announced an agreement that commits the two entities to explore the feasibility of joining together to create a regional ISO.

A study released October 13, 2015, shows integration of the two Western grid systems could result in overall customer benefits ranging from $3.4 billion to $9.1 billion over 20 years. The study was conducted by Energy and Environmental Economics (E3).

The study also projects that development of a regional ISO is likely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through coordinated planning, reduced curtailment of renewable energy, and lower overall costs to build new renewable resources.

“We remain convinced that increased regional coordination of energy systems is key to helping keep costs affordable for customers, ensuring and enhancing grid reliability and allowing states and the region to best meet clean energy goals and requirements,” said Stefan Bird, Pacific Power president and CEO.

PacifiCorp will continue to work with ISO to further explore costs and other requirements needed to achieve the benefits of integration outlined in the study, as well as to develop a transition agreement and process to seek regulatory approvals.

Around electricity, safety rules

Safety is the highest priority at Pacific Power. The company consistently reminds contractors, farmers and schoolchildren to always be aware around overhead and underground power lines to avoid accidental electrical contact.

Pacific Power also encourages employees to do whatever it takes to keep the public and its own employees safe. One wrong move around an overhead power line could cause life-altering injuries or death.

With winter weather on its way, the potential for storms and car accidents increases. These events can take down power lines, which may energize trees, fences or the ground around the area. Members of the public are urged to stop, think and evaluate the situation to stay out of harm’s way.

If you spot an electrical wire down, assume it is energized and keep everyone out of the area. Immediately call 911, and then call Pacific Power toll free at 1-888-221-7070. Never go near or make contact with a downed power line.

If a power line falls across your car while you are inside, stay put until help arrives. If you attempt to leave the vehicle, you may be electrocuted. If the car is on fire and you must exit, JUMP as far away as possible, with both feet together.

Pacific Power offers free electrical safety presentations to schoolchildren, police and fire departments, contractors and other community groups. For information, visit pacificpower.net/safety. To schedule a presentation or order free educational materials, please call 1-800-375-7085.
Top underused technologies for savings

The U.S. Department of Energy has identified promising but under-utilized devices and ranked them by their potential to save energy. Some of the top technologies are listed below:

• **Task lighting** can reduce overall lighting energy use by 15 to 25 percent when used strategically. Adding controls provides the potential for more savings.

• **High R-value windows** feature triple panes, spectrally selective coatings and thermal breaks that reduce thermal loss and solar heat gain.

• **LED lighting** is becoming more cost-competitive for indoor and outdoor uses. Benefits of LEDs include efficiency, dimmability and compatibility with controls.

• **Computer power management settings** automatically put computers in sleep mode or other low energy-consuming states. One facility with 50,000 computers implemented this technology and reduced energy costs by 40 percent.

Learn about incentives for energy upgrades at bewattsmart.com.

Helping our communities

Pacific Power Foundation grants and employee volunteer efforts support the growth and vitality of local communities. In California, recent foundation grant recipients include:

• Great Northern Services
• Great Shasta Rail Association
• Mid Klamath Watershed Council
• Training Employment and Community Help
• Yreka Community Resource Center

In addition to providing grants to local organizations, the foundation supports employees’ community involvement and charitable contributions. The foundation boosts employee contributions and volunteer hours with matching dollars going to eligible nonprofits, local United Way chapters and energy assistance programs. To learn more, please visit pacificpower.net/foundation.