



GREEN LIGHT NEW ORLEANS

**lowering New Orleans' energy usage
one light bulb at a time**

Green Light New Orleans
8203 Jeannette Street
New Orleans, LA 70118
504-324-2429

green@greenlightneworleans.org

WWW.GREENLIGHTNEWORLEANS.ORG

NEWS RELEASE

Three Years After Katrina and Rita, New Orleans' Grassroots Effort Brightens Environment, Community

Fundamental Concerns of Some Local Residents Addressed by Non-Profit

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Contact: Lauren Tucker

Telephone: 504.324.2429

New Orleans, Louisiana - Green Light New Orleans, an energy efficiency program, is still helping to rebuild New Orleans. Equal parts environmental and social aid, the non-profit's solution to mitigate carbon emissions while helping low-income residents has demonstrated once again that simple ideas can result in remarkable impact. Green Light New Orleans sends volunteers to area homes to install free compact fluorescent light bulbs, educate homeowners on the energy saving and environmental advantages of CFLs, and discuss the importance of recycling used bulbs and take other energy efficient measures in their homes.

Executive Director and Founder, Andreas Hoffmann, started the program in response to the 2005 storm. A Swiss-born roots rock musician, Hoffmann's idea began in his own home, expanded to his band's tour, and has since become one of New Orleans' most effective energy-efficiency programs.

"After Katrina I had to do something to help the city of New Orleans and it had to be connected to the cause of the storm: global climate change. When I returned to New Orleans I changed the light bulbs in my home and after experiencing the reduction on my energy bill first hand, I decided to use CFLs as a means to offset the tour pollution of my band. After we installed a few thousand CFLs to meet the tour goal, I quickly realized that there was a need for this kind of energy efficiency program, and founded Green Light New Orleans in October 2006," said Hoffmann.



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The simple premise has net unmistakable results. In two years, the organization has installed 120,000 CFL light bulbs in New Orleans, enough to offset nearly 60 million pounds of carbon. The estimated 5 to 8 year savings is approximately \$5.5 million for the city's residents; an average household will save about \$1400 in energy costs during the period. What's more, Green Light New Orleans' growth has been monumental. Over 3,000 households are currently on the organization's waiting list for installation. This means that the organization currently has as many households waiting for immediate installation as it has completed throughout its entire history. The installation is free of charge to every resident.

Perhaps what makes Green Light New Orleans most effective is its unique organization. Led by Hoffmann, three staff members organize packs of volunteers that descend on the nonprofit's base every week. Operating out of a brightly painted, shotgun-style row house close to Tulane University, Green Light New Orleans plans and prepares seemingly impossible logistics as routine: small windows of time in which residents will be home to receive volunteers; the appropriate quantity, size, and wattage of light bulb for each household; directions; maps; confirmations; names; and safety assessments. The three staff train and pair teams of volunteers with households while teaching them about the environmental and economic impact of the program.

To date, over 1,600 volunteers have worked with Green Light New Orleans. Many volunteers are attracted to the program because of its unique combination of environmental and social agendas. The intimacy of working directly with homeowners – most affected in one way or another by the hurricanes – coupled with the opportunity to discuss climate change and energy costs with the immediacy of offering a solution is powerful.

“The people we met and helped out were amazing. They were so friendly and excited about what was going on that it made it very enjoyable and worthwhile to change their light bulbs. Today we got to make a difference for people economically and environmentally. That alone is spectacular,” said a volunteer from Succasunna, New Jersey.



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Green Light New Orleans receives thirty or more applications for the program each day. Residents not only save money on their energy bills, but they also realize that there are several simple steps that can be taken to reduce energy usage and mitigate global warming. In a follow up survey conducted in June 2008, 57% of Green Light New Orleans program participants reported that Green Light's service encouraged them to take other energy efficiency measures and almost all of the participants claimed that they are prepared to purchase CFLs when their current ones burn out.

"I am elderly and just got back into my home after hurricane Katrina. I am on a fixed income and I would really appreciate all the help that your organization can give with energy efficient light bulbs and in return it would lower my light bill," described one resident in her application to Green Light New Orleans.

About one-third of the funding for Green Light New Orleans is through a carbon trading agreement with EcoSecurities, the largest carbon trader in the United States. Green Light New Orleans sells the carbon reduction generated by installing CFLs to EcoSecurities in order to offset pollution in other areas of the world. The rest of the program is funded by corporate sponsors such as Entergy New Orleans and Coca-Cola, as well as private donations.

"We support Green Light New Orleans in their efforts to mitigate climate change at a grassroots, community level," said James Heath, Head of U.S. Origination for EcoSecurities. "Citizens of New Orleans have experienced firsthand the effects of climate change and it is important to incorporate forward-thinking, energy efficiency measures in the rebuilding efforts. We are excited to be part of this partnership, and hope it will serve as a model for future projects."

The model for Green Light New Orleans has proven such a success that it has begun to expand to other communities. Hoffmann estimates that Green Light New Orleans will install over 3 million CFL light bulbs over the next 5 years. Should that goal be met, Hoffmann's simple idea of changing light



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bulbs will result in the reduction of a whopping one billion 422 million pounds (1,422,000,000) of carbon from the earth's atmosphere.

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About Green Light New Orleans:

By helping households make the switch from incandescent light bulbs to energy efficient CFLs, Green Light New Orleans helps residents reduce their household energy consumption, save money on their energy bills, and encourages individuals to rebuild in a more affordable and environmentally conscious way. Green Light New Orleans focuses on changing awareness as they change bulbs, planting a seed that teaches participants that small changes can make a difference in combating the effects of global warming and rebuilding in a more efficient and sustainable manner.

For more information please contact executive director Andreas Hoffmann or Lauren Tucker at 504.324.2429 or andreashoffmann@greenlightneworleans.org

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