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PACE picks up

Group helps make businesses 'green'

*By Tony Kindelspire
Longmont Times-Call*

LONGMONT — What began as a 1995 pollution-prevention program within the city of Boulder has blossomed into a broader program that has spread countywide.

Boulder County and the cities of Boulder and Longmont contribute financially to support Partners for a

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Clean Environment. At the beginning, PACE was formed to work with restaurants, medical facilities and print shops to keep pollutants out of the county's waste stream.

But the program has expanded to work with all businesses, not only in pollution prevention but also in waste reduction.

"When I first started five years ago, we joked that we did feel like telemarketers," PACE team leader Bill Hayes said about cold-calling businesses to get them to participate. "Now, businesses continually call us."

Flatiron Veterinary Specialists is one Longmont business that has become PACE-certified. Matthew Rooney, owner of the surgery department at Flatiron Veterinary, said he used PACE consultants to help make his business as "green" as possible.

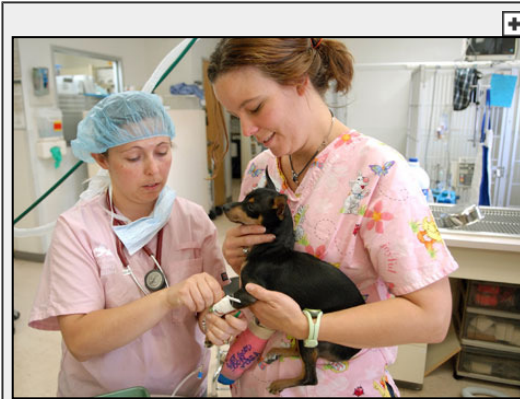
"In general, the medical industry is notoriously wasteful because of having to be clean and sterile," Rooney said. "So being green is tough."

PACE consultants suggested the vet hospital recycle as much as possible, compost all food items, use electronic forms instead of paper and, when paper is required, use 100 percent post-consumer paper.

Installing lighting fixtures that operate only when needed and using "green" cleaning supplies when possible are other changes that helped the animal hospital become one of more than 200 businesses countywide with PACE certification.

"With our composting and recycling, we have cut our waste two-thirds to three-quarters," Rooney said. "We used to have trash picked up four times per week, and now we're barely one (pickup) with our Dumpster."

The animal hospital also has cut down on waste by recycling the plastic cases syringes come in. The cases are of such low-grade plastic that Eco-Cycle won't take them. But the staff at Flatiron Veterinary located a company out of state that will take them, so the clinic



Certified veterinary technician Sheri Peterson, left, and veterinary nurse Wendy Hart prepare a Chihuahua with a broken leg for surgery at Flatiron Veterinary Specialists, 230 S. Main St., on Thursday. Flatiron Veterinary Specialists is one of hundreds of Boulder County businesses that are PACE (Partnership for A Clean Environment)-certified. **Lewis Geyer/Times-Call**

Find out more

For more information on Boulder County's Partners for a Clean Environment program, call 303-786-PACE (7223) or visit www.pacepartners.com. More information on Longmont Power & Communications' energy-efficiency programs can be found by calling 303-651-8386 or visiting the LPC section of the city's Web site at www.ci.longmont.co.us.

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stores the cases until it has enough to make shipping them cost-effective.

PACE is a voluntary program, Hayes emphasized, and its goal is to help businesses.



“Even though I work out of the same offices as the restaurant inspectors, who are regulators, we are not regulators,” Hayes said. “Since we’re dealing with businesses, we know that anything we recommend has to be a good decision from a business standpoint.”

On Tuesday night, the Longmont City Council approved \$33,065 in funding and an agreement with the city of Boulder and Boulder County to partner on the

PACE program.

Longmont Power & Communications spokesman Bill Ewer said the effort will help expand his department’s attempts to get more businesses to become more energy efficient.

Many small businesses, Ewer said, have been reluctant to get the free city energy audits LPC provides.

A lack of time, a lack of expertise, a fear of what improving energy efficiency might cost them and the burden of paperwork required to work with the city were all barriers LPC identified that discouraged small businesses from getting involved.

Through the city’s partnership with PACE, the organization’s representatives will act on behalf of LPC, telling businesses about incentives and rebates available to them through LPC.

If a business expresses interest, PACE will pay for an independent energy consulting company, Boulder-based Nexant, to contact the business and explore ways it could save money by becoming more energy efficient.

Nexant essentially becomes the project manager, Ewer said, overseeing changes made and handling all the paperwork, at no cost to the business.

“We’re hoping that through this program, we’ll get a lot more of the small-business owners and operators in Longmont to take advantage of the incentives we offer,” Ewer said.

Tim's Toy Shop, a Toyota repair shop in Longmont that will turn 10 years old next month, has been PACE-certified for about two years, according to owner Tim Roach. PACE's consultant helped him find a place in Longmont where he could send oil filters to be recycled, he said.

"Basically, we recycle almost everything we have here," Roach said. "We even use recycled parts."

"Very little actually goes out to the trash. ... On a weekly basis, we don't even fill (a standard trash can)."

Hayes said the PACE program has garnered attention across the country, and other communities have contacted him about setting up programs of their own. But in Boulder County, there's still room for the program to grow, he said.

"What we've been always striving for is if you go to your dentist and you don't see a PACE sticker, you'll say, 'Hey, I'd like you to see about getting PACE-certified,'" Hayes said.

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