



## Rising Sun Energy Center

(510) 665-1501 [www.risingsunenergy.org](http://www.risingsunenergy.org)

2033 Center Street Berkeley CA 94704

### **Canals Program Summary California Youth Energy Services Summer 2006**

In 2006, Rising Sun Energy Center established a California Youth Energy Services (CYES) site in the Canal District to offer Canal residents free energy conservation services and hardware. CYES hires and trains local youth to provide free in-home energy education and hardware installation to homeowners and renters.

The CYES Canals program demonstrated high success in our premiere season in San Rafael. Program highlights included:

- **Provided employment and employment training to nine Canals youth, ages 14-21.**
- **Provided over 324 Canals households with energy saving hardware and information.**
- **Served 310 non-English speaking households in Spanish and Vietnamese; over 95% of our total clients.**
- **Saved Canals residents approximately \$130,000 in energy dollars.**

### **Energy Savings**

CYES students installed the following materials in Canals residences at no cost:

- 2,075 Compact Fluorescent Lamps
- 151 Efficient-flow showerheads
- 394 faucet aerators

At current rates, the energy saved through these installations will save Canals residents over **\$130,000** in energy dollars<sup>1</sup>.

### **Residents Served**

The CYES Canals program was designed to serve hard-to-reach households, defined as a) non-English speaking households that often do not receive services due to language barriers, b) renters, and c) low-moderate income households. This summer, out of 324 homes served:

- Over 300 homes were non-English speaking, and received services in their native tongue (Spanish and Vietnamese)
- 100% were renters
- 100% were low-moderate income households

### **Community Partnerships**

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<sup>1</sup> Assuming an average of \$.11/kwh and \$1.00/therm.

CYES partnered with the Canal Welcome Center and Marin Municipal Water District to implement the 2006 CYES program. The Canal Welcome Center provided integral support in securing a program location, identifying and hiring local youth, and contacting local property owners and managers.

The CYES program operated out of the Canal Welcome Center, and CWC staff regularly volunteered as translators for CYES youth who did not speak English. Additionally, the CWC was an outstanding support in recruiting youth employees, recommending 8 out of the 9 students who gained employment through CYES. Finally, the CWC helped plan and set up the making of a promotional video about the Canals CYES program, which can be used for future program promotion.

CYES also partnered with the Marin Municipal Water District to provide funding and materials for the CYES water conservation services. MMWD generously donated all water conservation hardware; CYES students also gathered survey data on household water use for MMWD records.

### **Community Benefits**

The CYES program helps build a strong community on many levels. Some of the quantitative and qualitative accomplishments of the 2006 Canals CYES program include:

- *Development of green jobs and job skills for underserved youth.* Due to language and residency barriers, youth in the Canal district often do not receive employment training or opportunities for meaningful employment. CYES provides both basic job skills training and trade-specific knowledge for green/energy related jobs. By employing youth to conduct “green” energy conservation work in their own community, CYES provides a model for a meaningful and viable career path.
- *Bring energy awareness and knowledge to a hard to reach population.* Due to language barriers and split incentives between landlords and renters, many Canals residents do not have access to energy efficiency programming provided by the State and the CPUC. CYES not only brings services directly to these households via bilingual energy specialists and renter-specific marketing, our students provide personalized service and house-specific recommendations for energy savings. We place a primary importance on connecting with each client, and providing reliable, trustworthy, and relevant information, so that clients gain a new level of access to efficiency information.
- *Client Comments.* In our client feedback surveys, 90 % rated the services as excellent, and 96% rated the services as good or excellent. Specific comments include:
  - *“Gracias por su alluda comunitaria y por educarnos como ahorrar energia [sic].”*
  - *“Solo quiero agregar que son un programa excelente, gracias por ayudar a la comunidad a ahorrar energia [sic].”*

- *“I’m extremely impressed with the students; they were courteous, patient, and efficient... what a wonderful program for them, and too for all others involved. Kudos to the person or persons who thought of and put this program together!”*

### **Recommendations and Next Steps**

The CYES program provides an outstanding return rate of energy savings per dollar spent as well as job training and employment for local youth, and brings energy efficiency awareness to under-served sectors of the community. Based on our success in 2006 and the community’s enthusiastic response to our program, we recommend that CYES continue to provide energy efficiency services to the City of San Rafael and the Canal District via locally-based summer programs.