SELFGEN Success Story

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San Diego REGIONAL ENERGY OFFICE

Cogeneration system first project submitted for the SDREO Self-Generation Incentive Program

"Self-generation has given me comfort in the unsettling California electrical market."

Bob Echter, Owner of Dramm & Echter

A Combined Heat and Power (cogeneration) system used to support Dramm & Echter's flower growing business in Encinitas, California was the first project submitted for the San Diego Regional Energy Office Self-Generation Incentive program.

Ben Erpelding, Energy Engineer for the SDREO, inspects Dramm & Echter's cogeneration system.

The system is comprised of three 5.7 Liter Generac 50 kW natural gas fired internal combustion engines. Each engine is equipped with heat exchangers that capture waste heat from the engine jacket and exhaust to generate hot water. The water is used to heat greenhouses and to sterilize water used for irrigation.

Waste heat from the internal combustion engines is utilized for nutrient processing and heating 12 acres of greenhouses.

The system generates approximately 75% of the site's electricity needs, significantly reduces the amount of gas needed for the existing boilers, and was installed at less than $1,200/kW. Business owner, Bob Echter, took advantage of the SAFE-BIDCO loan program to finance the system, as well as a $52,900 incentive check from SDREO, and calculates a simple payback of 3.2 years. This equates to a Return on Investment (ROI) of over 30%!

The Self-Generation Program provides monetary incentives for residential and business customers to produce part of their own energy through "self-generation". Self-generation technologies include photovoltaics, wind turbines, fuel cells, microturbines, small gas turbines, and internal combustion engines. Over $15.5 million worth of cash incentives are available this year. For more information please contact Nathalie Osborn at (858) 244-1193, or email at nos@sdenergy.org.