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Beverly Pizza takes part in United Illuminating energy program

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Bridgeport, CT Beverly Pizza has been serving customers for nearly six decades. Last year, owner Elias Katsetos was approached by Artis Energy Solutions about an opportunity to save energy through United Illuminating's Small Business Energy Advantage Program.

Providing free energy assessments and recommendations for efficiency upgrades, the Small Business Energy Advantage program can help customers save energy, and improve operation costs. Katsetos was no stranger to small business incentives offered by United Illuminating (UI) and Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG), subsidiaries of AVANGRID, Inc. Back in the late 1990s, UI helped replace light bulbs at Beverly Pizza with the standard for energy-efficient lighting at the time. Advancements in lighting technology and UI's holistic approach to identifying energy savings opportunities for customers provided new upgrade options this time around.

With incentives from UI totaling almost \$43,000, the restaurant was able to make nearly \$61,000 in improvements. The upgrades included new interior and exterior lighting, LED bulbs installed in its two outdoor signs, replacement of the old gas furnace and gas fired water heater with new high-efficiency equipment, installation of an Energy Star certified high-efficiency air conditioning unit and updated vending machine controls.

“This time, in addition to updating lighting, they determined our furnace from 1981 was at the end of its life and came up with a proposal that would satisfy our needs,” said Katsetos. “Our big exterior sign light was using a lot of electricity because of its fluorescent lights; with the new LED bulbs, the difference is noticeable already.”

Operating in a distressed community with a qualifying average peak demand energy use, Beverly Pizza was also able to take advantage of UI and SCG’s Micro Business Energy Assistance Pilot (MBEA) incentives, which covered 75% of project costs. MBEA incentives are going to be integrated into the Small Business Energy Advantage program for 2022.

“The incentives made the project financially feasible and allowed them to save energy, which is good for the environment, and make improvements that are good for the business and the neighborhood,” said Kim Peters of Artis Energy Solutions. “The upgrades made are critical to restaurant businesses to ensure their customers are comfortable.”

During hot summer months, the new air conditioning unit kept the kitchen and restaurant cooler. The contractors worked in the dining room each day before the restaurant opened and then moved to other spots in the building so as not to disturb the customer experience.

For decades, Energize Connecticut programs have been helping small businesses find ways to make their operations more energy efficient and support improved comfort and aesthetics.

“This project is a great example of how the program has evolved through the years, not just to provide the latest in technology and solutions, but also to assess the bigger picture and apply a variety of offerings to help our customers,” said Colleen Morrison, small business program m

anager, United Illuminating. “Returning to the program can provide a host of upgrade opportunities for businesses, everything from weatherization, HVAC, AC, heating and aerators to refrigeration controls and advanced lighting options.”