

Energy Trust of Oregon  
421 SW Oak St., Suite 300  
Portland, Oregon 97204

Telephone: 1-866-368-7878  
Facsimile: 503-546-6862  
energytrust.org



## NEWS

October 4, 2012

For Immediate Release  
Susan Jowaiszas  
503-546-3624  
susan.jowaiszas@energytrust.org

### **Energy-saving technology takes flight at Southwest Oregon Regional Airport**

*Airport district installs pilot-controlled lighting to reduce waste and lower costs*

NORTH BEND, Ore – October 4, 2012 – With direct daily flights to and from Portland and San Francisco, Southwest Oregon Regional Airport is a gateway to Oregon's south coast for business and leisure travel, and general aviation purposes.

Like most commercial airfields, the airport's four runways need to be well-lit and accessible 24 hours a day to serve the on-field Coast Guard station, the air ambulance, corporate jets and other commercial needs. But infrequent overnight air traffic meant leaving the airfield's 449 runway and taxiway lights on all night, consuming energy whether it was necessary or not.

Since it wasn't economical to pay for energy consumption that wasn't needed or keep staff on hand to turn runway lights on just for emergencies, Executive Director Theresa Cook and Airport Maintenance Manager Bob Hood turned to Energy Trust of Oregon for ideas.

The airport installed pilot-controlled lighting, an exterior lighting control system that allows aircraft pilots to control airport runway lighting by a series of clicks from the microphone on the radio. Pilots use their radio to activate the lights and adjust the intensity of light. Once the lights turn on, pilots have 15 minutes to land and taxi before the lights are automatically turned off. The change has no impact on pilots, who are familiar with the system at other airfields.

"The savings have been significant," said Hood. "Since the system has been installed, we've decreased our daily kilowatt hour usage by half. The airfields are still accessible at all hours, but we're only using the lights when we need them. Additionally, this extends the life of the runway light bulbs, which on average cost \$8 a bulb; multiplied by 449 fixtures, we're achieving even more savings. And environmentally, we are throwing away fewer used bulbs and reducing light pollution by minimizing light use."

Energy Trust provided Southwest Oregon Regional Airport, a customer of Pacific Power, with a cash incentive of \$5,187 for the energy-saving improvement, which covered more

than 30 percent of the project cost and is saving more than 159,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually.

The airport is operated by the Coos County Airport District, a special district overseen by a Board of Commissioners that answers to the citizens of Coos County. “We’re accountable to the taxpayers and need to show we run the airport like a business,” said Cook. “By saving energy and reducing our utility costs, we demonstrate that we are spending the public’s money wisely.”

Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping utility customers benefit from saving energy and tapping renewable resources. Our services, cash incentives and energy solutions have helped participating customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas save more than \$1 billion on energy bills. Our work helps keep energy costs as low as possible, creates jobs and builds a sustainable energy future. Learn more at [www.energytrust.org](http://www.energytrust.org) or call 1-866-368-7878.

END