

# Energy savings making arrival

Airport authority nearly halfway through installation of more efficient lighting

By [Eric Anderson](#)

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New energy saving lighting shines down on the baggage area of the Albany International Airport this afternoon Feb. 7, 2013 in Colonie, N.Y. (Skip Dickstein/Times Union)

COLONIE — With a monthly electric bill that's in the tens of thousands of dollars, the [Albany County Airport Authority](#) decided it was time to change the lights.

With help from [National Grid](#) and the [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's](#) Flexible Technical Assistance Program, the airport is halfway through replacing nearly 2,000 fixtures in all parts of the airport with new, energy-efficient bulbs.

Light-emitting diodes and high-efficiency fluorescent bulbs are being installed in the baggage claim area, the third-floor terminal offices, the galleries and exhibit areas, the observation area and the authority's own conference room.

Lighting costs for the terminal are projected to fall by 76 percent, once all of the new fixtures are in place, said airport spokesman [Doug Myers](#).

The airport joins companies ranging from IBM to Steinway Piano in taking advantage of the FlexTech program, as it's called.

The program "helps customers make informed energy decisions," NYSERDA spokeswoman [Dayle Zatlin](#) said. Lighting needs are studied and there's quite a bit of planning involved before changes are actually made, she added.

FlexTech targets commercial and industrial buildings.

In the airport's case, it was National Grid that first brought the program to its attention, said airport CEO [John O'Donnell](#).

"NYSERDA, National Grid and the (New York) [Power Authority](#) keep us apprised of what's available" in energy efficiency programs, he added.

The current project will cost \$349,293, with National Grid providing \$90,656 of that figure. Annual savings are expected to total just under \$66,000, with a payback period — how long it takes for the savings to pay for the project's cost — of less than five years.

Over 20 years, total savings are expected to reach \$1.2 million, Myers said.

The lighting audit was conducted by Novus Engineering P.C., while Horizon Solutions — [Energy Services](#) installed the new lighting.

The airport authority is approaching phases of the lighting replacement project slowly.

"We plucked all the low-hanging fruit, the one- and two-year paybacks," O'Donnell said. "The technology is changing so rapidly that we're taking a slow approach."

One example: The airport replaced its lights in the parking garage just three years ago.

Now, NYSERDA and National Grid want to change the bulbs again. They're just that much more efficient, O'Donnell said.

Information about the FlexTech program may be found at <http://www.nysesda.ny.gov/flextech>.

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