

NYSERDA's Retro-commissioning Initiative for Commercial Buildings

Kimberlie A. Lenihan
NYSERDA

Synopsis

The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) launched the RCx Initiative in March 2004 to work with both demand and supply-side market actors in key New York markets to expand the adoption of retro-commissioning in New York State. Specific objectives include: increasing building owners' and building managers' awareness of RCx and its financial and energy benefits, increasing demand for RCx services among building owners and managers, and expanding the availability of qualified RCx services providers in New York.

RCx Initiative goals include: 1) delivery of at least 40 executive briefing sessions with interested customers and associations; 2) completion of at least 20 RCx Scoping Studies; and 3) support for the development of RCx proposals leading to the full RCx investigation of at least 10 buildings in New York.

The Initiative is designed to provide a risk-free opportunity for qualified RCx service providers to work with building owners to ascertain whether a given building has enough opportunities to justify a full RCx project. NYSERDA established criteria to qualify participating service providers for participation in the Initiative, and has set forth pre-screening criteria for potential buildings to be retro-commissioned. Qualified service providers receive a modest \$3,000 incentive for the completion of a Scoping Study (maximum of three during the program period) on a specific pre-screened building. Eligibility to receive Scoping Study incentives requires completion of four steps:

1) demonstration of a firm's qualifications; 2) the successful completion of a training course by at least one staff member from the firm that will be conducting the RCx work; 3) identification of a building that passes pre-screening criteria, and 4) submission and approval of qualified RCx Initiative Scoping Study.

The purpose of the Scoping Study is to examine building documentation, conduct a walk-through of the facility, make observations, and determine the relative cost-effectiveness of conducting a full RCx investigation. The Scoping Study summarizes the preliminary evaluation of the building systems and operations, and provides a scope of services including tasks, schedule, and costs to conduct a full RCx investigation project for the building. A standardized reporting format has been developed to enable the building owner to readily apply for cost-shared assistance to conduct a RCx project through NYSERDA's FlexTech Program or Technical Assistance Program.