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Collaboration leads to cost and energy savings for border businesses

SANTA FE, NM – The Economic Development Department’s Office of Mexican Affairs (OMA) as part of a collaborative effort with New Mexico Small Business Assistance program through Los Alamos National Laboratory has provided a \$60,000 annual energy cost savings for Ffhoenix Cuivre, a copper fabrication and insulation company in Santa Teresa, NM.

The Office of Mexican Affairs in 2008 began to work with the New Mexico Small Business Assistance program, which utilizes the expertise and resources of Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories, to address electricity issues in the industrial sector in Southern New Mexico. As part of this initiative LANL is currently assisting Santa Teresa’s industrial base in analyzing energy costs for future production operations, and the result has been cost and energy savings for manufacturers.

"LANL’s study for Ffhoenix Cuivre highlights the value of improved energy awareness, which potentially translates into significant savings for commercial and industrial consumers in New Mexico," said Loren Toole, Energy Sector Analysis Team Leader for LANL. "By evaluating information provided by the company," he said, "we were able to identify patterns of energy usage that contributed to higher costs. Communicating this information and explaining how the pattern could be changed is the approach we needed to deliver,"

In order to improve power delivery to production plants located in the Santa Teresa region, LANL conducted a study on alternative billing options that evaluate electric billing options based on published utility rate schedules. The report provides economic comparisons of rates and a discussion of low-cost or no-cost modifications to process schedule and conservations measures that can save money.

"The improvement actions provided were down-to-earth and business conscious, not relying on ‘Star Wars’ technology, out-of-reach investments, or impractical changes to our operations. In fact, with no investment other than our time, we have already implemented Action 1, which will save us \$5,000 per month on our electric bill. We are already hard at work on developing the plan for actions 3 and 4, which, with investment, will save us up to \$40,000 per month in electricity costs and as much as \$60,000 per year in maintenance costs," said Brian French, president and COO of Ffhoenix Cuivre.

Such companies as Ffhoenix Cuivre implemented LANL analysis for their production process schedules and have already seen monthly savings. Other companies, such as Monarch Litho and Glaz-tech, have received LANL’s assistance and are in the process of implementing the analysis within the next six months.

“On behalf of the Office of Mexican Affairs and Trade and the New Mexico Border Business Community I would like to extend my most sincere appreciation to Los Alamos National Laboratory for assisting us in making the border more energy efficient. New Mexico’s technology sector has proved to be its most important asset in making our state a true 21st century industrial hub,” said Juan Massey, director of the Office Mexican Affairs.

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