

## Response to Questions on the FY 2011 Budget

**Request By:** Supervisor Cook

**Question:** Provide updated numbers relating to the annual cost to the County government stemming from the “Cool Counties” initiative?

**Response:** Environmental initiative projects are provided for consideration through the annual publication of the Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) and considered as part of the development of the annual budget. On June 21, 2004, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors endorsed and adopted “Environmental Excellence for Fairfax County: A 20-year Vision,” also known as the Environmental Agenda. The Environmental Agenda is organized into six themes: Growth and Land Use; Air Quality and Transportation; Water Quality; Solid Waste; Parks, Trails and Open Space; and Environmental Stewardship. The Agenda centers on two principles: conservation of the limited natural resources must be interwoven into all government decisions; and the County must be committed to provide the necessary resources to protect the environment.

In response to the Board’s directive, the County Executive facilitated an interagency collaborative process to prepare a comprehensive and coordinated response to address the objectives identified in the Environmental Agenda. As a result, the first Environmental Improvement Program (EIP) was initiated in FY 2007. The EIP addresses both environmental project and policy needs. The EIP provides a framework for the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors to make decisions regarding environmental investment and project planning as well as a policy needs assessment. In FY 2007 the County was presented with a National Association of Counties achievement award for its Environmental Agenda and EIP Programs.

Since the creation of the EIP, prioritized environmental projects have been approved by the Board of Supervisors as part of the annual budget process or at regularly scheduled budget quarterly reviews. EIP projects are funded in support of the Board of Supervisors’ Environmental Agenda but do also support other Board initiatives including the Cool Counties Initiative and the Comprehensive Plan.

In July 2007, Fairfax County and several other large counties from across the country joined the Sierra Club in announcing the creation of the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Initiative, a major new initiative to combat global warming. The counties pledged to reduce global warming emissions 80 percent by 2050, an achievable average annual reduction of 2 percent. The Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Initiative also urges the federal government to adopt legislation requiring an 80 percent emissions reduction by 2050 and calls for fuel economy standards to be raised to 35 miles per gallon within a decade. The Cool Counties Initiative is both a declaration and a conceptual plan that provides a template or a menu of options for local governments to consider to further reduce emissions associated with fossil fuels and other pollutants.

Since the approval of the Cool Counties initiative in July 2007, some EIP projects that have been approved by the Board as part of the budget process also support the Cool Counties Initiative.

These projects include:

- \$107,120 for lighting retrofits and upgrades at Fairfax County Park Authority facilities. These lighting projects at park facilities for energy efficiency and conservation include: lighting retrofits such as the installation of LED exit signs; replacement of 400-watt High Intensity Discharge (HID) lamps with 300-watt lamps; replacement of florescent lamps with incandescent lamps; and occupancy sensors at targeted locations. These energy saving retrofits are anticipated to save approximately \$60,000 annually in utility expenses.
- \$278,100 for energy management initiatives at 8 park facilities. These improvements consisted of the installation of web-based wireless control of key mechanical systems to allow automatic run time scheduling, phased start up to avoid peak demand utility penalty charges, remote access, and run time history reporting. In addition, funding was included for several motor replacements to improve efficiency, optimizing units for pool pumps and air handling units. These initiatives are estimated to reduce costs and energy consumption by 16 percent in the facilities currently operating with antiquated systems and are expected to reap long term, system-wide environmental and cost benefits.
- \$150,000 for phase II of the landfill gas pipeline at the I-66 landfill complex. This project will use landfill gas from the closed I-66 landfill as a source of renewable energy to heat the West Ox Bus Operations Garage. The use of this renewable energy is expected to save approximately \$50,000 annually in utility expenses at the garage.

In addition, energy improvements have been a continuing effort throughout the County and replacement of facility equipment such as HVAC and lighting equipment that has reached the end of its useful life is replaced with more energy efficient equipment.

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