

CAMBRIDGE CONSUMERS' COUNCIL

831 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. (617) 349-6150

349-6153

City Of Cambridge

Paul J. Schlaver
Executive Director

serving the
residents of:

Cambridge
Boston

To: Robert Healy, City Manager
From: Paul Schlaver, Consumers' Council Director
Date: September 6, 1995

RE: COUNCIL ORDER #12, DATED 4/3/95 RE: Possibility of an
ComElectric Energy Saving
Light Bulb Program for
Elderly

I must report, first of all, that the establishment of a discount program on energy saving light bulbs is not as easy a task as it may sound. My research has found that Boston Edison no longer does such a program. MASS-Electric does have a program whereby customers (any customer, not just the elderly) orders bulbs from a catalog and received deep discounts. The typical "compact fluorescent bulb" costs about \$20 and the price after the discount is about \$6 for the consumer. Also, a small municipal electric company in Taunton has a light bulb leasing program.

Any conservation program put in place by a utility company must pass a "cost effectiveness standard" as defined by a recent Supreme Court decision. When a program is developed by a utility company in such a way that it appears that it can meet this standard, it is submitted to the DPU for approval.

I have spoken with Steve Geller, the Director of Conservation Programs, at ComEnergy. He said that for the last several months an active effort has been underway to establish a program for Cambridge Electric and Commonwealth Electric customers. He said that it is not easy to be able to put together a program that saves enough energy in proportion to the cost of it. He does know the program would be popular based on customer surveys. The company will learn by early October if it can pass the "cost effectiveness test". If it does it will go forward to the DPU for review and approval and start the program after the first of the year.

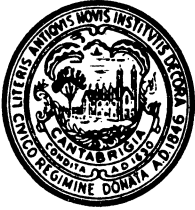
The essence of the program currently on the drawing boards includes the ability of ANY COM/ELEC customer to order by telephone or mail a 3-PAK of Compact Fluorescent bulbs for about one fifth of the actual cost of the bulbs. The bulbs would be guaranteed and

shipped to each customer. These bulbs last a very long time (10,000 hours approx.) and should be used in locations in the home where lights are left on the longest each day.

Mr. Geller was very responsive to my suggestions of ways the city (especially the Council on Aging, Cable TV and my office) might be able to assist in the promotion and education of this program if it happens. At this point it appears that there is about a 50/50 chance it can be put together in a way it can obtain DPU approval. He promised to keep me informed of the situation.

I asked Mr. Geller about any other efforts of his company that might be beneficial to Cambridge residents. He told me that a new, long term program called the GREENSAVER PROGRAM is now underway. It has been contracted out to EUA/Citizens Conservation Services of Lowell. I spoke with them and can report that it is a program that targets public housing developments and tentatively has identified 12 sites in Cambridge. The first phase will include either placing energy efficient light bulbs in fixtures inside apartments and in common areas or actually changing the fixtures as needed. There will be no cost to the tenants of the units. This should positively impact many senior citizens as well as low income residents of Cambridge. I will try to obtain more information on this program. It is my understanding that it is a multi-year effort and should also reach income eligible multi-family units not in public housing. Also, it might include other conservation measures such as sealing air leaks and window replacements.

In conclusion then, **ALL** Cambridge customers of Com/Elec **MAY** have an opportunity to purchase energy efficient light bulbs way below cost next Spring. Also, other energy efficient measures that will bring savings to lower-income Cambridge residents are beginning to be implemented through the GREENSAVER PROGRAM.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300

FAX 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

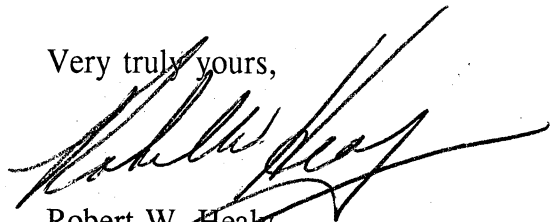
RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

September 11, 1995

To The Honorable, The City Council:

With reference to Awaiting Report Item No. 22, regarding a discount program on energy saving light bulbs for seniors, please find attached a response from Paul Schlaver, Director of the Consumers' Council.

Very truly yours,



Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda Item Number 24

S-279
Response to Awaiting Report Item Number
Twenty-Two regarding a discount program
on energy saving light bulbs for seniors.

*for original see
1995 City Manager
Requests #122*

In City Council,

Sept. 11, 1995

Placed on file