

David Darlington, Conservation Consultant case study



THE CHALLENGE

How do you get nearly 14,000 people spread out over 17 school sites, several maintenance facilities, a central office and even an FAA farm to reduce resource usage? Simple — hire conservation consultant David Darlington.

When California's Livermore Joint Unified School District first contacted David, the focus was initially on energy reduction.

THE SOLUTION

During the early phases of the School District's green initiative, David met with an Elkay® representative and was impressed with the ezH2O® bottle filling stations. The units offered a number of advantages beyond simply reducing solid waste caused by discarded plastic water bottles.

"Traditional drinking fountains aren't very efficient if you consider how much water is going into your mouth versus down the drain. And then you see the ezH2O bottle fillers and they deliver water in a very precise way with minimal waste."

"We're not only reducing our waste, we're teaching students healthier habits by encouraging them to drink cool filtered water instead of other sugary beverages."

THE RESULTS

Starting with two ezH2O bottle filling stations in the high school, the district now has a total of 18 units at 11 different sites, with plans for more units in the works.

"The first unit went into the student union and it was an immediate hit. Students knew exactly what it was. They knew how to use it. In just the first week, we saved the equivalent of about 1500 plastic bottles."

David estimated that today the bottle fillers in the 2 high schools alone are saving 20,000 – 30,000 plastic bottles per year.

"We're not only reducing our waste, we're teaching students healthier habits by encouraging them to drink cool filtered water instead of other sugary beverages. So the benefits go beyond cost savings."



David Darlington, Conservation Consultant case study (continued)

But the savings are, in fact, quite significant. David figures that between solid waste, water, electricity and natural gas, the Livermore Joint Unified School District is now saving about \$300,000 annually from its holistic focus on reducing resource usage.

David also liked the health benefits of the hands-free interface. "Drinking fountains can spread germs and viruses because there are so many student hands and mouths sharing the same surfaces. Now, with our bottle fillers, a sensor activates the water flow and students simply handle their own refillable bottles."

According to David, "After auditing over a million square feet of buildings, we quickly realized that electrical usage was just the beginning. Every resource had to be considered. Were there new technologies that could reduce waste? How could we modify behavior? We looked at everything."

THE FUTURE

One of the goals for 2016 is to have at least one ezH2O in every school in the district. Which should translate directly into even more savings.

David is particularly interested in the new generation of energy-efficient bottle fillers, which launched in June of 2015. The cooler can be programmed to be shut off when buildings are closed, reducing electrical use during evenings and weekends.

David recalls, "It's great to see the program means something to the kids as well."