

Executive SPOTLIGHT

Editor's Note: Executive Spotlight is a profile of an individual, business or local industry here in the South Sound. The feature will appear in the print edition of the Business Examiner as well as its online sibling, the BE Daily. Candidates from this feature are chosen from print and BE Daily subscriber lists. To subscribe, visit www.BusinessExaminer.com.

Company enjoys direct gains from federal money

Michael Kim does not hear about federal dollars or programs, and wonder about where that money is really going or how it will impact small businesses like his.

Rather, he is able to see the type of benefit stimulus plans offer when he looks at his company, Advanced Energy Management, and the 15 electricians he was able to hire because of a federal program that funds counties' efforts to weatherize low-income housing.

All of those qualified electricians had been previously laid off by other employers. Advanced Energy Management was able to hire them full-time after receiving the competitive bid for King County Housing Authority's available work. So, not only is the program benefiting those facilities that get new systems, but also the people who are once again able to have a steady income.

"That's the whole purpose in what King County is trying to do through the federal money," Kim said. "It's impacting a lot of people. I hate to use the cliché, but it's a 'win-win' for all."

The company improves facilities' lighting and bathroom fans. Kim said they normally take on private and commercial projects, but currently have their hands full with the amount of work they have received from the



Michael Kim, far right, was able to hire 15 electricians because of a federal program that funds counties weatherizing low-income housing.

King County project.

When the company begins a job, it does an audit of the facility, no matter if it is private, multi-family or a commercial property, to see

how they can make the lighting systems more efficient. The work seeks to cut wattage from systems and on making lighting in areas brighter. On average, it reduces usage per fixture 30 per-

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cent. A lot of low-income housing projects Kim has worked on still have the original equipment from when they were first built. The company is working closely with the county's weatherization department to make sure it can complete about 400 properties or units a month. Kim said Advanced Energy Management will continue to see progress because it follows where the business is going. The firm has tried to find a niche in the green building industry, which Kim feels is a strong market even in a slow economy.

"That's where I saw the trend going," he said. "The Pacific Northwest is very progressive."

While Kim's employees continue their work in King County, the business is moving to Pierce County, relocating to a 6,000-square-foot space in Parkland, which is significantly bigger than its location in Federal Way. **BE**