

# Connecticut has a Simple Solution to Saving Energy

**By Mark Fitzgerald**

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**F**or Robert Marshall, innovation means efficiency. But for the state of Connecticut, saving money is the *sine qua non* that frequently brings a new idea to the table.

The Office of Policy and Management awarded Marshall \$1,000 for a proposal to cut operating expenses of large electric motors. The idea is to train state employees to oversee and maintain high horsepower machinery—to not only make these motors more energy efficient, but ultimately to do away with outside contractors.

Large state agencies spend millions each year to run these motors, which propel rotational energy into systems that can power conveniences such as elevators, air conditioners, water pumps, and blowers. Marshall estimates that a 1% reduction in energy consumption would save Connecticut \$80,000 to \$90,000. “I know a lot about how electrical motors use energy,” says Marshall, who teaches about electrical power quality and energy engineering. “So I thought maybe I can use this knowledge to help the state save money.”

The appropriations committee will pay \$10,000 for two courses that Marshall will teach at the Ella Grasso Regional Vocational Technical School. State employees will be selected for this advanced training based on their knowledge of electrical systems. The courses will focus on power quality analysis and energy systems management using electrical motors of at least 125 horsepower.

Representative Robert Simmons, who helped approve the funding for the courses and who serves on the committee, doesn't mind the initial investment. “The state employees who complete this course will eventually save the state hundreds of thousands of dollars. It was a wise investment that will pay us dividends for years to come.”