



## Let There Be Cheaper Light

By Cathy Tyson



Workers installing more energy efficient lights Photo courtesy of Jennifer Russell

Lafayette recently received a lighting audit of the aging Lafayette Community Center. Kate Merrill, Technology Services Lead of Energy Solutions explained that this was just phase one of a two-phase project. Phase one dealt exclusively with lighting, phase two, which is still under investigation, addresses heating and cooling systems as well as the building envelope. ABAG, the Association of Bay Area Governments, is working in partnership with P G & E in this free program for municipalities to improve efficiency. Energy Solutions provides comprehensive strategic design, technical and marketing expertise for this and other types of energy programs.

According to City Manager Steven Falk, “Analysts from P G & E checked out every single room and, as you might imagine given the age of the building, found lots of opportunities to save money. In fact the audit recommended that 290 light fixtures be replaced with new energy efficient ballasts and lamps.”

Merrill explained, in a linear florescent lamp the ballast delivers energy to the bulb, it’s half the equation of energy

efficiency.

“What’s particularly good news is that through a joint ABAG/ P G & E conservation program, the utility will pick up more than \$7,000 of the \$11,000 total retrofit cost. It’s a project that, once done, will save the City \$9,974 per year – and the project will thus pay for itself in only six months,” continued Falk.

Jennifer Russell, Parks and Recreation Director, whose office is in the Community Center, is pleased with the results so far. “They’ve used half as many light bulbs and it’s so much brighter. It’s an amazing program.”