

Application: Pathways

Product: Greenway

Result: Improved campus
Safety & Security through Solar
Lighting

8/18/2010



Odessa College Solar Success Story

Solar Pathway Lighting for Odessa College Campus



SOL Inc 2010

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Odessa College is located in Odessa, Texas, a progressive West Texas city of more than 90,000 people midway between Fort Worth and El Paso.

A review of its history reveals a success story of a public institution that has maintained the community college spirit and has grown by successfully serving the people of Ector County and the Permian Basin. Beginning with 184 students in 1946, OC has grown steadily through the years. Approximately 5,000 students are enrolled in university-parallel and occupational & technical credit courses. Additionally, 11,000 individuals enroll in one or more Adult Basic Education, Continuing Education or Community Recreation courses.

Today, the main campus in Odessa spreads over 80 acres and includes some 25 buildings that house more than 150 classrooms, laboratories and other facilities.



Challenge

Until recently in areas where the students walked to and from class it often meant a dark and shadowy experience. Current lighting failed to provide light where needed to make people feel comfortable upon arriving to the campus. Students feel safer and more secure walking from the parking areas to classes when the pathway is well lit. The lighting design should encourage students to interact and study on campus, compared to a come-and-go environment familiar to many other education models.

New Greenway™ Solar Lights

Despite the lack of well lit areas the school additionally faced the challenge of antiquated lighting and wiring from the existing system on campus. The beautiful campus setting was not to be disturbed with construction that would ruin the landscape and pathway areas to replace the wiring. “We had to start from scratch if we wanted to replace the electrical and lighting fixtures. We could not even use the old bases for the poles because they were not up to current specifications. It would have been a major disruption to trench down sidewalks and through

landscaped areas to reconnect to the electrical lines” said Bob Chastain, Director Physical Plant of Odessa College.

As leaders of the community we wanted to make wise economic choices as well as create a welcoming image to the campus. “One thing I can tell you is do your research on lighting, compare the upcoming technology to gather information to present to the decision makers. I was doing research for over 3 years before making the decision. It’s a hard sell to convince the board to spend money unless there is a real benefit,” said Chastain.

The campus evaluated solar lighting systems for over a year before installing the SOL GreenWay™ systems on campus. “Our Board of Trustees was skeptical about the cost of solar lighting at first but we were able to save about 20% of the cost of a new system hooked up to the electric system. Now they are big fans of the solar lighting on campus,” explained Chastain.

“One thing we won’t miss about the old lights is writing out the check to the utility company each month those savings can go towards the student services. It looks like with just the pathway lights we will be saving over \$8,000 per year in electric bills.” Bob Chastain, Director Physical Plant.

The Project

- Project
Greenway Path Lighting
- Location
Odessa, Texas
- Designer
SOL Inc & Odessa College
- Product
80 watt Series with
20 watt LED
- Installer
Willis Electric Co., LP
- Completed
Winter Break 2010

Once the GreenWay™ system was selected, Odessa College pursued a design approval and procurement process. They selected a local installer to place the systems per the design. With the Greenway system it didn’t take us long to install all the lights and we only had one hole for each pole. “We read the instruction manual and it was a quick install just like an assembly line” said Tommy Willis, Willis Electric Co. “We have our own equipment so the installation went smoothly and we were impressed with how little time they took to assemble.” Once installed, they were up and running that night. There was a minimal disruption to the campus since it was done during a break from classes.

The foreman for the electrical contractor was even impressed by the light the systems put out since this was his first installation of solar lighting. “We are happy with how easy the systems installed and we are excited about installing more solar light systems on campus and other locations” commented Mr. Willis.

Customer Feedback

The SOL Warranty program was a nice bonus the college does not have to worry about the system for quite a long time. Maintenance responsibilities are cut considerably because the features of the system include an ultra bright LEDs rated to 70,000 hours, no light bulb changes for a long time. Warranty includes 10 years on electronics, wiring, fixtures and 20 years on solar panels. “We know they have 24/7 technical support but we have not had to call anybody because the system is working great,” commented Chastain.



Commuter students now coming to the campus at night feel more welcomed and secure now that the new solar pathway lighting system has been installed. “The new lighting systems make a statement that we are committed not only to safety but to renewable energy as well.” Students comment on the fact that the campus is “brightened up” now that the new lights are installed. Odessa College is so impressed with the lighting that they are now applying for additional grants for further capital improvements that include solar lighting on other sections of the campus. “Our students comment on the dark spots on campus and as soon as we have more funds solar is the way to go to get lighting to those locations” said Chastain.

Pathway Solar Lights on Campus

About SOL Inc – www.solarlighting.com

SOL Inc is the world leader in solar LED outdoor lighting solutions with over 40,000 systems installed in more than 61 countries on six continents. Since 1990, SOL has introduced innovative and cost-effective solar lighting systems that provide unsurpassed levels of illumination and reliability. SOL Inc develops, manufactures and markets commercial/industrial-grade solar powered and energy efficient lighting systems for a wide range of lighting applications including area and security, street and roadways, sign and billboards and transit and shelter lighting. SOL Inc is ISO 9001:2008 certified and committed to superior design, manufacturing, and customer satisfaction.