



## Energy Watch Program Presents Menlo Park Jewelry Store's Collection in its Best Light

Martin Oncina has a long and steeped family history in the jewelry business. While watching his father manage a jewelry store in San Francisco as a child, he learned the subtle nuances of the business and began to naturally develop his own passion for fine jewelry. Since opening Oncina Fine Jewelry in 2007, his vision has been for it to be more than just a jewelry store, instead creating a boutique experience that showcases the jewelry as true art and develops an allure that entices and dazzles customers. To create the environment that Mr. Oncina envisioned, lighting would play a critical role.

### The Challenge

Being uninspired by the existing store lighting, Mr. Oncina started looking for alternatives. He found that his current incandescent bulbs were using a lot of energy while also making it uncomfortably warm in the store. Even more importantly, the existing lighting was not distributed well, and the effect was uneven and scattered light. In an effort to create the dramatic effect that he wanted and perhaps save energy, Mr. Oncina began replacing his incandescent lights with more energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs a few at a time. This, however, was a slow and expensive process. Having heard about the San Mateo County Energy Watch (SMCEW) program for small businesses and nonprofits, Mr. Oncina decided to contact the program to find out what assistance it could provide.

Lighting is critical to showcasing a fine jewelry collection, and Martin Oncina needed a solution for his high energy use as well as a way to achieve the store environment that he wanted.

### The Solution

The San Mateo County Energy Watch program is a partnership between PG&E and the City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) of San Mateo County, a public agency that represents San Mateo County's 20 cities and the County itself. The energy efficiency turn-key program works exactly as it implies: energy efficiency specialists manage the entire project for customers, starting with the initial survey of existing lighting and ending with the final quality check after the installation. In addition, the program offers rebates that typically cover 30-100% of the project's cost.



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*- Martin Oncina, Owner,  
Oncina Fine Jewelry*



Once Mr. Oncina connected with Energy Watch, an Energy Efficiency Consultant was sent to conduct a free, comprehensive assessment of the store's existing lighting system. Based on that assessment, the Consultant presented Mr. Oncina with a detailed proposal that included his unique energy savings opportunities, recommended upgrades, projected bill savings, and applicable rebates. The total cost to install the new lights was approximately \$2,000, but Energy Watch rebates covered over 98% of the project, with Oncina only responsible for \$34 out of his own pocket. With Mr. Oncina's approval, the work was scheduled and quickly completed with program-certified professional contractors, replacing 40 small track lights in the store over the course of just a few days.

As a busy small business owner, Mr. Oncina was delighted that the entire process was easy and straightforward and that the work didn't interfere with day-to-day store operations. He was impressed with the care and consideration that the team took while conducting the installation. "They were very sensitive about not interrupting my business," Mr. Oncina said. "They wouldn't even run the vacuum when a customer was here."

After the installation, an Energy Watch employee contacted Oncina to make sure that he was satisfied with the light quality and the professionalism of the contractors. This step further solidified Mr. Oncina's positive impression of the program. "I'm pretty surprised that a program of this caliber would be offered, especially with such quality. I might not have been able to do this retrofit on my own as a small business owner."

The simple lighting upgrades dramatically improved the quality of the store's lighting, displaying the jewelry at its best and making the store more comfortable.

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### The Results

Mr. Oncina is enjoying the higher quality of the new lights and finds that they produce a refreshing new level of illumination on his jewelry and deliver the gallery-style effect that he envisioned. He can also leave the lights on longer without being concerned about high energy use or overheating the store. As for the money he'll be saving on his monthly utility bills, Mr. Oncina has decided to invest it in new energy-efficient internal lighting for the store's jewelry cases.

## Project impact

Installation Cost	Rebate	Total Out-of-pocket Costs
\$2,000	\$1,966	\$34



### About San Mateo County Energy Watch

Energy Watch is a public-private partnership between the County of San Mateo and the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). We provide cities, schools, and small businesses with the resources they need to pursue energy efficiency at a low cost. We partner with Ecology Action, a California-based 501c3 nonprofit and industry leader for energy efficiency and sustainability, to implement customer projects and provide technical assistance. To learn more about how Energy Watch can save you money, please visit [www.smcenergywatch.com](http://www.smcenergywatch.com).