

RenewableNY:

Bringing Manufacturing Businesses the Power to Retrofit

A report by the New York Industrial
Retention Network, a project of:



Contents

Introduction	3
Program Overview	6
Impacts	8
Challenges	11
Conclusion	14

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Introduction

In 2005, the New York Industrial Retention Network (NYIRN), now a program of the Pratt Center for Community Development, launched an initiative that combined project management and small grants to encourage industrial companies in New York City to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. NYIRN sought to use these sustainability measures to improve a company's competitiveness, thereby helping to support local businesses and retain jobs. The combination of upfront financial commitments, which is a shift from the prevailing strategy of deferring a commitment until after an audit, plus extensive project management assistance helped to increase business responsiveness.¹

NYIRN has provided grants to 39 NYC companies to implement energy efficient projects. These companies employ approximately 3,054 people in total.

NYIRN has provided grants to 39 New York City companies to implement energy- efficiency projects. These companies employ approximately 3,054 people in total. NYIRN awarded nearly \$1 million in grants, and the average grant was approximately \$24,000 per company. Projects ranged from simple lighting upgrades to more complex solar energy systems, cogeneration units, energy efficient processing equipment, and other measures. The projects leveraged an additional \$2 million in funds from the New York Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and other sources, and in many

instances would not have occurred but for NYIRN's grant.

RenewableNY originated as the North Brooklyn Energy Grant Program, created in response to the 2005 rezoning of the Williamsburg-Greenpoint industrial area. Funding was provided by the Mayor and the New York City Council for two rounds of energy grants. In 2009, NYIRN expanded the program citywide as RenewableNY with funding provided by the U.S. Department of Energy, through the assistance of New York Congressman Jerrold Nadler. (In this report, NYIRN's energy grant programs, including those allocated through the North Brooklyn Energy Grant Program, are collectively referred to as RenewableNY.)

Reaching New York's industrial sector is important because it contributes approximately 8 percent of citywide carbon emissions.² However, successfully motivating manufacturers to make energy investments is a challenge because:

- **Manufacturers often rent their space and must amortize their energy investment over the remaining time on their leases;**
- **The City's manufacturers tend to be small businesses, averaging under 20 employees, and do not have the technical capacity or discretionary management time to research and implement the improvements and then to seek reimbursement from the relevant agency; and**
- **The chicken and egg dilemma that a company often will not commit to pay for and go through the labor of an energy audit if there is no reciprocal commitment that some funding will definitely be available to implement the audit's findings.**

RenewableNY raises awareness about opportunities for energy efficiency, assumes some of the management

1. In June 2010, the boards of the New York Industrial Retention Network and the Pratt Center for Community Development voted to consolidate the two organizations, which had collaborated previously on many projects. The boards determined that such a consolidation would improve the delivery of services while reducing overhead costs.

2. City of New York, Inventory of New York City Greenhouse Gas Emissions, September 2010, by Jonathan Dickinson and Rishi Desai. Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, New York, 2010.

or administrative burdens and provides seed funding to both close any gaps and provide greater certainty of return on time and investment. As a result of this assistance, including the bundling of small projects that individually would not have attracted the attention

of energy service companies, RenewableNY achieves real impacts for businesses and helps the city to meet its ambitious goals to reduce carbon emissions. The benefits include:

- **Energy savings;**
- **Leveraging additional private and public financing;**
- **Reducing energy costs and improving the competitiveness of the underlying business;**
- **Strengthening the local energy-services sector; and**
- **Helping the City meet PlaNYC environmental goals and upgrade existing buildings.**

RenewableNY demonstrates that a simplified grant program that provides both upfront commitment of funds and project management support can be successful in addressing a long-acknowledged obstacle in energy efficiency: how to get businesses to invest in energy-efficiency capital improvements now that will save them money in the long run. Such a program could be the determining factor for some companies to decide whether to undertake energy efficiency projects. Local, state, and federal authorities are seeking strategies that maximize the benefit of public spending on energy efficiency. The RenewableNY model presents a strategy that is economical, technically feasible and has immediate impact.

Focus on Urban Industry

New York City manufacturers play a vital role in the diverse local economy and in providing solid, blue-collar jobs for New Yorkers. Although largely an unseen sector, manufacturers are prime examples of small businesses that provide critical goods, services, and revenue for the city. There are approximately 6,500 manufacturing firms in New York City, with a total of 80,000 employees.³ The manufacturing workforce is particularly diverse: 78 percent are people of color, 64 percent are immigrants, and 82 percent live in the outer boroughs.⁴ Many of the businesses are family-owned, and their employees are neighborhood residents. NYIRN has been providing assistance and advocacy for manufacturers since 1997.⁵

New York City firms produce an amazing range of products, from bicycles to furniture to pickles. Many New York City firms produce specialized, high-value goods. New York City firms have the advantage of being near a large customer base and the flexibility to quickly respond to customer needs. Major sub-sectors include apparel, food and beverages, printing, and metals. These firms generate significant value for the local economy; the food sector, for example, makes \$5 billion of products annually and adds approximately \$1.3 billion to the gross city product.⁶

Along with enjoying the advantages of being in New York City, local manufacturers face a unique set of challenges. They tend to be smaller than the average U.S. manufacturer, are frequently located in mixed residential/light-

3. New York State Department of Labor, 2009

4. New York State Department of Labor, 2005

5. While the NYC industrial sector as a whole has diverse needs, NYIRN focuses exclusively on the sub-sector of manufacturers (other industrial sub-sectors include warehousing, transportation, and utilities).

6. NYIRN and Fiscal Policy Institute, February, 2007. "More Than a Link in the Food Chain: A Study of the Citywide Economic Impact of Food Manufacturing in New York City."

manufacturing neighborhoods, and often rent their facilities, making them ineligible for government incentives aimed at property owners. In addition, the real estate instability of New York's industrial areas deters investment because the manufacturer may be uncertain that he will be able to amortize his investment in a particular location. Finally, the cost of real estate, labor, and energy in New York City is relatively high. These factors can prevent companies from making investments in capital improvements.

Overcoming the Challenges of Energy Efficiency

Despite the benefits of reducing high energy costs, there are several challenges to encouraging local industrial companies to undertake energy efficiency projects in New York City.⁷ Many manufacturers are small businesses that often do not have the depth of management to investigate renewable energy technologies, find out about government incentives that can make projects economically feasible, complete complicated application processes, or identify qualified service providers and obtain multiple bids. In addition, as family businesses, they may not be well-capitalized and may find it difficult to make up-front investments in a project.

RenewableNY was developed to overcome these obstacles. The program demonstrates that small business owners, including renters, will invest in energy efficiency improvements if they are provided with project management assistance, as well as a small upfront grant to encourage additional investment. An estimated one-half of projects would not have occurred but for RenewableNY funding. In other cases, RenewableNY enabled a company to expand a project that was already in progress, or fill a gap in financing and thereby expedite project completion.

7. For a detailed description of these challenges, see "Energizing New York's Small Businesses," a report by the Center for an Urban Future, February 2010.

Program Overview

RenewableNY provided companies with grants and project management assistance. NYIRN allocated a total of nearly \$1 million to 39 companies, with an average grant of approximately \$24,200 per company, nearly \$1,000 per employee.

Under the original North Brooklyn Energy Grant Program, the first phase of RenewableNY, companies had to be located in Brooklyn Community District 1 to be eligible for a grant. In this phase, the funding for the program was one of several remediation measures connected to a local rezoning. Focusing on one industrial neighborhood allowed NYIRN to leverage existing business networks and “create a buzz” that reinforced the message of competitiveness through sustainability. In addition, NYIRN aggregated several small projects which were located closely together. This aggregation helped to make the projects more economically attractive for the energy contractors. In the subsequent phase, a different funding source was available and the program became citywide.

Grants were allocated according to select criteria including the number of employees, annual energy consumption, cost of potential project, and projected energy and cost savings. Grants were awarded to cover a maximum percentage of the total project costs, so companies were required to contribute some level of investment. This ranged from about 5 to 80 percent.

NYIRN made the grant commitment before the company underwent the audit. From NYIRN’s perspective, there was no risk that the commitment would not be substantiated by the audit since some measures were obviously needed (such as lighting improvements, insulation and other air-sealing measures). From the company’s perspective, having the commitment and knowing that some energy efficiency measure was going to be funded and implemented was essential to inducing them to undertake the audit.

Project management was provided to help companies undertake and complete a project. NYIRN staff visited each facility, and was in regular contact with companies, as well as the energy contractors, to facilitate project completion. RenewableNY helped companies:

- **identify an energy efficiency measure tailored to the company’s financial and energy needs**
- **connect with energy auditors and contractors**
- **competitively bid a project**
- **access available NYSERDA and other incentives**

Summary of Projects	
Total number of companies	39
Total number of employees	3,054
Median number of employees	25
Total amount of grants allocated	\$943, 917
Average grant	\$24,200

SUNA BROS.

Location: Manhattan

Sector: Jewelry

Employees: 20

Project: Lighting



Suna Bros., Inc. has been manufacturing fine jewelry for over 70 years. A third-generation, family-owned business located in Manhattan's Diamond District, Suna Bros. has 20 employees, including highly trained craftsmen, many of whom have been with the company for over 20 years.

Aron Suna, president of the company, had long been interested in updating his lighting. As is the case for many companies, it was not merely an issue of ordering new bulbs: the lighting fixtures and ballasts themselves had to be changed in order to handle the more efficient bulbs. Several

years ago, he contacted ConEdison about one of their upgrade programs, but the funding was no longer available. When he heard about NYIRN's RenewableNY grant program, Suna was immediately interested. This was the first government-funded program that the company had ever applied to; every other time it looked into a program, the administrative burden just seemed too much. As Suna told NYIRN staff, "You made it very easy."

Through RenewableNY, Suna Bros. was directed to NYSERDA's small energy audit program. For \$100, an energy auditor came to the site and conducted an analysis of potential energy savings measures, along with projected costs. According to Suna, the audit was a "great bargain." Once the audit was completed, it was clear that a lighting project made the most sense for the company.

NYIRN then connected Suna Bros. with Synergy Lighting Renovation, a local firm specializing in energy efficient lighting. RenewableNY allocated \$5,000 to help cover a significant part of the project cost. The lighting upgrade was completed smoothly and without any interruption to Suna Bros.' workflow, and the company now enjoys its newly energy efficient, well-lit workspace.

Project snapshot:

- **44 lighting fixtures upgraded**
- **Estimated annual energy savings: 12,234 kWh**
- **Estimated annual cost savings: \$3,425**
- **NYIRN grant: \$5,000**
- **NYSERDA rebate: \$660**

Impacts

Companies

The range of companies participating in RenewableNY reflected the diversity of manufacturing in New York City. The companies make products ranging from jewelry to aerospace parts to beer. The majority of companies were in the food and beverages sub-sector; this could be due to the prevalence of food companies in the city in general, and to the typically high use of energy by food companies due to refrigeration and baking needs. Other types of companies include accessories, aerospace, building products, chemicals, jewelry, leather, packaging, pianos, textiles, and windows.

Projects By Type	
Lighting	22
Solar energy system	5
Cogeneration & related equipment	5
Process equipment	6

Energy Savings

For each project, energy contractors calculated energy savings according to established energy efficiency standards, including those of NYSERDA. This allowed RenewableNY to build upon energy efficiency standards that already existed throughout the state, and to use NYSERDA standards as a measure of eligibility for receiving RenewableNY funding. RenewableNY sought to evaluate each project one year after installation to verify energy and cost savings.

Estimated energy savings* through RenewableNY include:

- **1,723,363 kWh saved through efficiency installations**
- **183 kW of solar energy systems installed**
- **16,625 thm of greenhouse gas avoided**

Other Financing Leveraged

Because grants are awarded to cover a percentage of the total project costs, companies were required to contribute some level of investment. For larger, more complex projects, NYIRN grants covered around 10 percent of the project; for other smaller projects, NYIRN covered up to 80 percent of total costs. The range of investment required by companies, therefore, varied significantly. Almost all projects took advantage of available city, state, and federal incentives; incentives from NYSERDA, in particular, were frequently used. In total, projects leveraged more than \$2 million in public and private investment.

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* Energy savings are based on estimates from audits and project proposals as available.

Supporting the Green Collar Sector in NYC

An integral part of RenewableNY is to connect manufacturers with qualified energy contractors. RenewableNY identified auditors, energy engineers, and contractors who had experience working on industrial projects in New York City and accessing available city, state, and federal incentives. These energy contractors are located in the city; accordingly, the program further contributes to the overall growth of the local green collar sector. As the city continues to focus on building its green collar sector, NYIRN's program provides another platform for the growing energy service sector.

Helping the City Meet Environmental Goals

The RenewableNY program has engaged 39 industrial firms in energy efficiency projects which leveraged additional public and private funds and reduced demand on the city's energy grid. These efforts also contribute to the goals of PlaNYC—New York City's long-term sustainability plan. Energy is a major focus of the plan and the city has developed several initiatives under this umbrella to reduce its overall energy consumption, foster a market for renewable energy, and generally raise energy awareness. RenewableNY—NYIRN's turnkey program of technical assistance and grants—has made a contribution to the goals of the sustainability plan and demonstrates that the city manufacturers are willing and able to play a role in achieving the city's sustainability goals..

BROOKLYN BREWERY

Location: Brooklyn
Sector: Food/Beer Production
Employees: 40
Project: Boiler



Photo: Wally Gobetz/Flickr

an energy audit and provided a grant to help cover the costs of the audit and the purchase of two new low pressure boilers for the expansion. Brooklyn Brewery was also able to secure funds from National Grid to put toward the cost of the audit.

Project Snapshot:

- **Energy audit and two new 49.5 hp low-pressure boilers at industry-standard 82% efficiency**
- **Estimated annual energy savings: N/A (expansion will raise overall energy use)**
- **NYIRN grant: \$39,000**
- **National Grid program: \$90,000**

Brooklyn Brewery was founded in 1987 to renew the centuries-old tradition of brewing flavored, all-malt beers in Brooklyn. The brewery headquarters was built in Williamsburg in 1996 and, along with facilities upstate it has become the 30th largest brewery in the U.S., selling to 25 states and 12 countries. Forty percent of its sales are made in New York City and 54 percent are statewide.

As a result of its success and its dedication to local brewing, Brooklyn Brewery is currently undergoing an \$8 million expansion into an additional 10,500 square feet in Brooklyn, where it will now produce most of its beer. As part of the expansion, the brewery wanted to create a more efficient brewing plant that would increase beer production while simultaneously reducing water and energy consumption.

The brewery contacted NYIRN about its RenewableNY program to see what financing assistance was available. Following submission of an application, NYIRN helped the company obtain

Challenges

Barriers to Participation

NYIRN sent mailings to more than 5,500 companies and received inquiries from approximately 50. This relatively low rate of return can be attributed to several factors, including the fact that the program required some level of financial investment on the part of the company, as opposed to covering 100 percent of installation costs. Some companies that replied to the mailing immediately stated that they were not interested in participating if they had to make any financial investments.

Another mitigating factor was that outreach for the program was done during the height of the economic crisis. Many companies were not in a position to undertake capital improvements at this time, even though energy savings could improve their bottom line.

Ultimately, the low rate of response did not impede the success of the project. The 39 companies that were selected were, by definition, interested in pursuing a project and were able to contribute some level of financial investment towards their projects. Furthermore, as the total amount of funding available was almost \$1 million over the course of three different rounds of grants. Each of the grant recipients was given enough funding to make a significant contribution to its project.

Selecting Companies

As a result of the outreach and marketing of the program, several companies that approached RenewableNY were already in the process of making energy efficiency improvements at their facilities. While these companies did not need project management or technical support, they were obviously still interested in receiving funding for their projects.

These projects were considered on a case-by-case basis to avoid unnecessary expenditure of funds. For some, it was clear that the project was nearly complete and funding was already in place; it was therefore decided that RenewableNY funding would not be awarded. For others, particularly those with larger multi-phase capital improvement projects or projects that were stalled due to financing constraints, it was decided that RenewableNY funding would contribute to the project moving forward.

Calculating Energy Savings

Since types of project varied, energy savings data was not uniform across projects. Energy savings for several projects (particularly lighting) were measured in annual kWh saved. For renewable energy systems such (i.e. solar energy systems), the size of the system (in kW) was tracked. For those projects involving boilers and ovens, energy savings was measured in thm saved. It was therefore difficult to formulate a total which could truly aggregate the impact of the program. In addition, it should be noted that industrial processes are relatively volatile in terms of operating hours and production runs. The majority of grant recipients are small businesses and their production cycles are dependent upon the frequency and size of orders which can impact the anticipated energy savings.

Maximizing the Funding

NYIRN considered several options to maximize the financing it was able to offer. In particular, NYIRN investigated the feasibility of offering loans as well as grants to eligible companies. Loans were considered since NYIRN would then be able to re-invest the funding towards additional energy efficiency projects once the loans were paid back. The program would thereby eventually become partially self-funded. Several structures for loans were considered, including partnering with financial institutions as lenders, setting up a revolving loan fund, and using funding as a guarantee for a third-party loan (in the form of a CD deposit, for example). NYIRN was eventually advised by U.S. Department of Energy representatives that there might be restrictions against using DoE funds in particular as guaranteed loans. It was ultimately decided that funding would be allocated only as grants. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other legislation enacted subsequent to the RenewableNY program, this obstacle may no longer be in place.

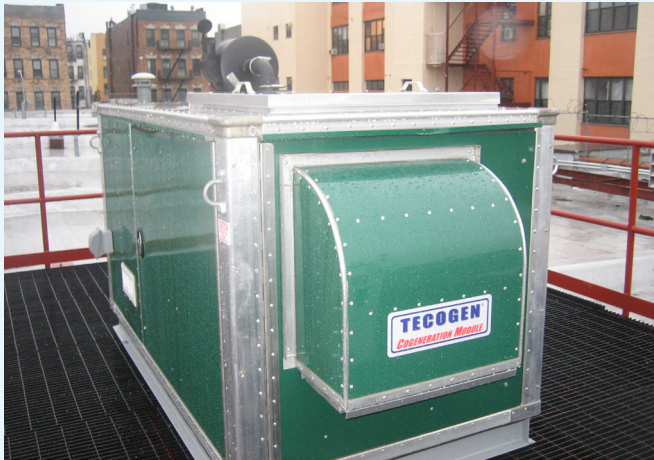
HOSKIE CO.

Location: Brooklyn

Sector: Food

Employees: 55

Project: Cogeneration



Hoskie Co. is a true New York City success story. The meat and fish processing business outgrew its original facility in Chinatown and moved to a larger space in Brooklyn that was owned by the Greenpoint Manufacturing & Design Center (GMDC). As the business continued to grow, and as Glenn Ho, the president, made significant investments in the facility, it began to make sense for Hoskie to own the site directly. GMDC sold the facility to Hoskie in 2009, and the sale was considered a “win-win” for both parties – Hoskie was able to

take advantage of tax benefits as properties owners (but not tenants), and GMDC was able to use the proceeds of the sale to further its mission to create more space for small manufacturers.⁸

Ho was in the process of working out details for a cogeneration installation when he learned about RenewableNY. A complicated installation requiring a significant financial investment, the project was partially financed through a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loan. RenewableNY contributed \$30,000 to the project, almost 10 percent of total project costs. According to Ho, through RenewableNY, “we know the City is good to us.”

The 75 kW cogeneration unit helps Hoskie save significantly in operational costs. The custom-designed system produces electricity and heat, which is then used for hot water and space heating. As Hoskie’s business includes defrosting products, a steady stream of hot water is crucial for the production process. While in the past, the water was heated by a conventional boiler, it is now heated by the waste heat captured by the cogeneration system. Hoskie expects to see a payback for the system within five years. In addition, through the installation of the cogeneration unit, Hoskie was able to apply for the City’s Industrial and Commercial Abatement Program tax incentive program.

With projected annual growth of 20 percent each year, Ho feels that it is critical to continue to upgrade his operations and facility. The cogeneration unit helps lower energy costs helping the business to be profitable, and gives Ho the chance to look for the next project to improve his facility, increase sales, and hire new employees.

8. “Tenant Profile: Hoskie Company,” A Model for New Manufacturing in Urban America, Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center Annual Report, 2008.

Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The RenewableNY strategy demonstrates that manufacturers and other small businesses can make an important contribution to meeting the climate change challenge. The management and financial hurdles that typically prevent their participation can be overcome if government programs and incentives are properly structured to meet small business needs. With this support, New York City industrial firms are poised to both play a critical role in helping the city achieve its sustainability goals, and also save high quality blue-collar jobs.

Future initiatives to support energy efficiency for small business will benefit from the following lessons learned through RenewableNY:

Companies must have clarity and certainty that they will see net benefits before they spend time and money pursuing efficiency improvements

Businesses are generally reluctant to commit to the cost of an energy audit without a clear future payoff in efficiency gains. Reduced-cost audits and up-front grant funds make businesses willing to undertake assessments and determine the costs and benefits of investing in improvements.

Companies appear more willing to undertake energy conservation projects when there is someone available to talk with them throughout the process and paperwork is limited

Retrofits involve multiple stages and contractors, from audit to installation to followup. Businesses—especially those that don't employ facilities managers—value having an advisor familiar with every stage of the process, and able to provide referrals to trusted contractors.

A company is more likely to take advantage of incentive programs when an energy contractor offers it as a part of its suite of services

Once businesses identify suitable contractors for audits and upgrades, they benefit appreciably when those contractors became a conduit to accessing state and utility incentive programs to help pay for the improvements.

Upfront financing is attractive to grantees that have limited capital dollars to put down for audits and improvements

Government and utilities offer helpful incentive programs that many small businesses are unable to access because of a lack of up-front funds. Cash grants provide an entryway for businesses that operate on tight margins.

Once a company completes an energy project, it is more likely to pursue another

Once an audit is completed, a business is poised to conduct multiple upgrades. Net savings from a first round of energy-use reductions help capitalize future improvements.

Clear and consistent communication with the grantee, energy contractor and other parties involved is the key to getting a project completed and in a timely manner

Consistent project management ensures that the company and contractors stay focused on energy-efficiency upgrades even when other business presses.

RenewableNY Projects

Company	Sector	Employees	Project	Location
A to Z Kosher Meats	Food	23	Lighting, refrigeration	Brooklyn
Acme Architectural Products	Metal	477	Compressor heat reclamation, controls	Brooklyn
Acme Smoked Fish	Food	151	Cogeneration motor synchronization	Brooklyn
Allied Sample Card	Printing	20	Lighting	Brooklyn
Angel's Bakery	Food	28	Lighting, refrigeration	Brooklyn
Big Big Produce	Food	12	Lighting, boiler insulation, and tune-ups	Brooklyn
Bo Bo Poultry Market	Food	34	Lighting	Brooklyn
Brooklyn Brewery	Beverages	40	Energy audit & boiler	Brooklyn
Carriage House Paper	Paper	3	Lighting, refrigeration	Brooklyn
Celtic Cabinet	Furniture	25	Lighting, air conditioning	Brooklyn
Colonial Mirror & Glass	Windows	85	Cogeneration	Brooklyn
Consolidated Packaging	Packaging	76	Lighting, air compressor	Brooklyn
Daedalus Design & Production	Furniture	15	Lighting, ceiling fans, vinyl stripping	Brooklyn
Dell's Maraschino Cherries	Food	24	Process equipment	Brooklyn
DL Laboratories	Chemicals	9	Lighting	Brooklyn
Dye-Namic	Textiles	45	Process equipment	Brooklyn
Dynamic Health Laboratories	Beverages	26	Lighting	Brooklyn
Gleem Industries	Chemicals	12	Lighting, heating	Brooklyn
Greenpoint Manufacturing & Design Center	Light Industry	500	Lighting	Brooklyn
Heavenly Kosher	Food	50	Lighting, water valves, refrigeration	Brooklyn
Hoskie	Food	38	Cogeneration	Brooklyn
Interstate Envelope Manufacturing	Printing	45	Lighting	Queens
Manhattan Special Bottling	Food	10	Heat exchanger	Brooklyn
Marjam Supply Co.	Building Products	75	Solar energy system	Brooklyn
Martel Design & Fabrication	Metal	5	Lighting, insulation	Brooklyn
Melita	Food	126	Ovens	Bronx
Pinquist Tool and Die	Metal	25	Lighting, insulation	Brooklyn
Precision Gear	Aerospace	143	Solar energy system	Queens
Rainbow Leather	Leather	10	Solar energy system	Queens
Sarut	Accessories	23	Solar energy system	Brooklyn
Skorr Steel	Metal	16	Audit only	Brooklyn
SteelDeck NYC	Metal	6	Lighting, vinyl stripping	Brooklyn
Steinway	Pianos	403	Solar thermal system	Queens
Suna Bros.	Jewelry	22	Lighting	Manhattan
Twin Marquis	Food	142	Cogeneration	Brooklyn
Van Hoek Woodworking	Furniture	3	Lighting	Brooklyn
Voila Bakeries	Food	90	Air curtains	Brooklyn
Williamsburg Metal Spinning & Stamping	Metal	7	Lighting	Brooklyn
Wonton Food	Food	210	Lighting, process equipment	Brooklyn
TOTAL		3,054		

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