

Saving energy, saving money at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

Successful energy management teams come in all shapes and sizes, but common elements include strong leadership, support from upper management, a multi-functional team made up of dedicated personnel, regular meetings, and team accountability.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) is home to one successful team that is achieving its energy goals by working continually to keep projects and awareness top of mind.

A STUDY OF SUCCESS

With main campuses in Green Bay, Marinette, and Sturgeon Bay, as well as five additional locations, NWTC started its energy team in 2007. The school structured the team in similar fashion to all its groups, programs, and committees to give it a solid foundation and offer participants a sense of continuity.

The team is cross-functional and comprised of a variety of staff members, including the chief financial officer, director of facilities, maintenance supervisor and mechanics, capitol projects manager, IT director, and other faculty and staff, along with representatives from its local utility and Focus on Energy.

The team meets every month using video-conferencing software to connect group members at the eight campuses. At the conclusion of each meeting, notes are posted on NWTC's Intranet so the entire faculty can see what the team is working on. "It's important that everyone knows what our goals are," said Dan Seidl, director of facilities at NWTC and energy team leader.

Together, the team found ample ways to save energy at its state-of-the-art facilities, which serve more than 42,000 students every year. "We started the team to reduce costs and improve our energy-efficiency efforts,"



The energy team at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College continues to find new ways to save energy on its eight campuses.

said Seidl. "I attended the Practical Energy Management training seminar through Focus on Energy and that was a major piece for us to get all the tools we needed to start our team."

Since starting the team, the college has saved more than 900,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity and 9,000 therms of natural gas annually—enough energy to power 100 Wisconsin homes for a year. NWTC has also saved \$80,000 on its energy bills each year. "Overall, we've cut energy consumption by 14 percent from last year," Seidl explained. Some of the projects NWTC has completed include:

- Replacing more than 900 light fixtures with high-performance, energy-efficient models.
- Adding occupancy sensors to several light fixtures. The sensors detect activity and automatically turn lights on when people enter a room and off when people leave.
- Heating upgrades, including installing infrared heating units.

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- Upgrading to energy-efficient NEMA Premium® motors, which reduce electrical demand by up to 18 percent and carry longer warranties than standard motors. They also generate less heat, helping to reduce downtime and maintenance costs.
- Installing variable-speed drives on motors, giving users a finer degree of control and helping regulate speed. In turn, this prolongs equipment life and reduces the maintenance costs of motor-driven equipment and switch gears.
- Continuing preventive maintenance on chillers and boilers, which improves equipment operating efficiency, prolongs equipment life, and reduces the need for costly emergency repairs and equipment downtime.

The team has also focused on behavioral changes and education across the campuses, including turning off computers and monitors at night and over weekends and utilizing monitor sleep-mode settings. Students also help with some of the team's projects. "We are training students for their future and getting the students more involved with our efforts," Seidl said.

The team continues to find new projects. "Right now we're working on some lighting projects, retrocommissioning our three main campuses, as well as working on a performance-contract bid to make sure our buildings are running as efficiently as possible,"

Seidl explained. "In the future, we're planning to focus on conservation, education, renewable energy, and transportation as we work toward reducing our carbon footprint 25 percent by 2013."

Would you like help starting an energy management team at your facility? The experts at Focus can help. Call us today at **800.762.7077** or visit **focusonenergy.com/energyteam** to take advantage of free resources, technical expertise, training opportunities, financial incentives, and project ideas (with proven track records of success) to help you increase efficiency and increase your bottom line.

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