

Energy Savers Update

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Energy Savers by the Numbers

6,200 units upgraded

160 buildings improved

\$4 million in financing leveraged

1.5 million therms saved

189 jobs created

Introducing the Energy Savers Update

Welcome to the Energy Savers Update. This newsletter is designed to help building owners, contractors, and others in northern Illinois connect with information and resources related to energy efficiency in multifamily buildings. The update is produced by CNT Energy and focuses on the Energy Savers program – a one-stop energy efficiency shop for multifamily building owners. CNT Energy administers the program in partnership with Community Investment Corporation and Energy Impact Illinois. For more information about the Energy Savers program or the topics covered in this newsletter, please contact CNT Energy at (773) 269-4037 or info@cntenergy.org.

Energy Savers Milestones

Since 2008, Energy Savers has retrofitted more than 6,200 units in more than 160 buildings in the Chicago region. Aside from these upgrades, the CNT Energy staff has conducted energy assessments in roughly 500 buildings – including over 17,600 units. Through Community Investment Corporation, the lending partner for the program, building owners have been able to leverage more than \$4 million in financing for building improvements.

These efforts have led to total energy savings of close to 1.5 million therms. Aside from energy and operation cost savings, the Energy Savers program has led to the creation of 189 new jobs. This program is benefiting building owners, tenants, the local economy, and the environment by reducing operating costs, making apartments more comfortable, creating jobs and saving energy.



Sandeep and Carolyn Sood of Nautilus Investments worked with the Energy Savers program to complete a variety of energy efficiency upgrades in their building on South Jeffery Boulevard in Chicago. Since improvements were completed in late 2010, the building's natural gas costs have gone down 45 percent, for a total savings of \$21,600.00. Learn more on page 2.

Energy Savers Success Story

Nautilus Investments: 6731 South Jeffery Boulevard in Chicago



Building owner: Nautilus Investments

Building type: Seven-story brick building with 55 units

Year of construction: 1928

Heating system: steam boiler

Heating fuel: natural gas

Energy efficiency upgrades completed

- Installed new steam boiler
- Installed new boiler controls with indoor temperature sensors
- Replaced hot water heaters with high efficiency models
- Insulated heating pipes

Energy savings

- Percent reduction in annual natural gas costs: 45%
- Total dollars saved annually: \$21,600

Sandeep Sood of Nautilus Investments has seen dramatic savings on energy costs for the building at 6731 S. Jeffery Blvd. since working with the Energy Savers program to complete a variety of energy efficiency upgrades. Since improvements were completed in late 2010, the building's natural gas costs have gone down 45% percent, for a total savings of \$21,600.

Sood learned about the Energy Savers program through the Community Investment Corporation (CIC), the lending partner for the Energy Savers program. CIC connected Sood with our team here at CNT Energy, the organization that coordinates the energy efficiency services available through the program.

CNT Energy's expert energy analysts evaluated the building and provided a customized report that identified areas for improvement and recommended the most cost-effective energy efficiency upgrades. The report also included estimates of costs, savings, and payback times associated with the recommended upgrades.

Sood decided to move forward with improvements that included replacing the boiler and hot water heater, installing boiler controls and sensors, and insulating the heating pipes. The CNT Energy team helped find qualified contractors, provided construction oversight, and evaluated the building's energy use before and after work was completed.

CIC provided a low-interest loan of \$80,000 to finance the bulk of the work, and additional grants helped with the cost of the pipe insulation.

Sood said that working with the Energy Savers program helped him make smart investments in his building, and the team from CNT Energy and CIC made the process go smoothly.

"It was great. It's always been a very cooperative relationship," he said. "We felt like they really worked on our behalf. Without their help, and without the low interest loans, it would have been very difficult to make these improvements."

Sood said he would recommend the Energy Savers program to other building owners. "You'll get information about your building and where your cost savings might be. And especially with multifamily building owners, you have to save every penny you can. It's a really worthwhile program. It has helped us out greatly," said Sood.

Building owners and contractors who are interested in working with the Energy Savers program can learn more at www.cntenergysavers.org.

Get Ready to Save on Energy this Winter

Proper Heating System Maintenance Could Reduce Your Bills

It's that time of year again. Winter coats and heavy boots are back in stores all over town. And it won't be long before we need to start using them. But how often do you think about what your boiler or furnace needs for winter? If you're like most building owners, you probably don't think too much about your boiler or furnace until something goes wrong.

Doing basic maintenance on your building's heating equipment can save you time, money, and hassle by finding and fixing issues before they get serious. Here are some recommendations to help keep your heating equipment running smoothly all winter long.

1. Schedule annual maintenance

Annual maintenance is the single most effective way to keep your heating system (including both the equipment and the distribution system) in good repair. Even though it requires some cash up front, having a technician come in and look over your whole system can save you money down the line. Having an expert examine the whole system can catch the unique issues or basic inefficiencies that develop in many heating systems over time.

Ask your heating expert for recommendations on ways to make your system work more efficiently. Boilers and furnaces need different types of tests, but both can benefit from combustion efficiency and safety testing to give you an idea of how efficiently and safely they're already working.

2. Check boiler controls

Checking boiler controls is another important maintenance task. It's a separate job from checking the boiler, and it usually requires a different service provider. At a minimum, the service provider should check the low-water fuel cutoff, the modulating control and sensors (if applicable), and pressure and temperature limit controls. The manufacturer's instructions are the best guide to which tests to run.

You should also make sure the controls are set to a reasonable temperature and schedule. Finally, be sure to train your maintenance staff on how to operate the controls and how to check low-water fuel cutoff – it should be tested several times per month.

3. Repair steam pipe and hot water pipe insulation

Properly insulating steam pipes and hot water pipes can reduce water and space heating costs. Once installed, pipe insulation needs to be maintained every year. Check the insulation to make sure it is still in good condition and securely attached to the pipes.

4. Check in on your tenants

Tenants can give you some of the best indications of how well your heating system is working. Once the heat is on in your building, have someone take a walk around the outside of your building to see if any tenants have left windows open or left air conditioners in the window. Open windows often indicate that some units are getting more heat than they need. This could also mean that others aren't getting enough.

Leaving air conditioning units in windows will make tenants cold in addition to wasting energy. Offering to remove, store, or cover air conditioners can save you time, energy, and money, while keeping your tenants more comfortable and satisfied over the winter.

For more energy saving tips, check out our fact sheets at www.cntenergy.org/buildings/energysavers/factsheets/



A member of the Energy Savers team conducts a combustion test on a furnace

Energy Myth Busters: Windows

Finding the best ways to reduce energy costs in buildings can be a complex process. Fortunately, the CNT Energy Myth Busters can help sort out fact from fiction. In this issue of the Energy Savers Update, we explore common misconceptions about window replacement.

Fact or Fiction?

Replacing the windows is the best way to save energy and money in a building.

Verdict:

Fiction. Replacing your windows is usually one of the least effective ways to save energy and money.

In general, window replacement should only be a top priority if your existing windows are broken, rotting, or in serious disrepair. Replacing windows might save a tiny bit of energy, but in most cases the costs far outweigh the energy saving benefits.

Fact:

In many cases, proper air sealing is the most effective and affordable energy efficiency improvement you can make. Air sealing refers to sealing cracks and gaps between the inside and outside of the building. This approach deals with the building as a system and focuses on the areas that need the most improvement. Combine air sealing with insulation to save even more. Typical building owners save 20 percent on heating after making air sealing and insulation improvements – upgrades that cost far less and save far more than new windows.

If you still think you need new windows, invest in ENERGY STAR® rated models and make sure they are correctly installed. This includes air sealing around the rough opening or framing. Air leakage around an improperly installed window can waste energy and create comfort issues for occupants.



Community Connections

The CNT Energy team regularly goes out in the field to raise awareness of the Energy Savers program, meet with building owners, lead energy efficiency workshops, and give presentations at events and industry conferences.

In August, CNT Energy staff presented at the Association for Energy Affordability Multifamily Buildings National Conference in Chicago. The team discussed how to increase the efficiency of central steam heating plants by balancing the heating distribution. John Brauc of CheckMate Realty and Scott Fewer of Fewer Boiler also participated in the session. Their field experience was much appreciated by the audience of more than 40 and energy efficiency professionals.

We also recently attended an open house hosted by the Lake County Redevelopment Corporation (LCRC) at an apartment complex called Gabriel's Corner in Zion, Illinois. CNT Energy conducted an energy assessment of this 18-unit complex and assisted with efficiency upgrades. Upgrades included the installation of a new hot water heater and boiler, low-flow showerheads, ENERGY STAR® appliances and roof cavity insulation. LCRC expects to save around 30 percent on energy costs as a result. These improvements are a major step toward a healthy, affordable, and comfortable living space for this community. You can watch a video about the project at http://lakecnty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?viewid=3&clip_id=1114.

If you are interested in scheduling an Energy Savers presentation or if you would like to showcase your building at an event for other building owners, please contact Jeanine Otte at CNT Energy at (773) 269-2222 or jotte@cntenergy.org.



ENERGY IMPACT ILLINOIS

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