

UW Health: Improves energy efficiency by nearly 25 percent; US Department of Energy honors efforts

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 26, 2018

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MADISON, Wis. – UW Health has saved an estimated \$13 million over the last five years by improving energy efficiency by 24 percent.

The U.S. Department of Energy honored UW for the achievement, which is part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Better Buildings Challenge. The Challenge is a national initiative which works with market leaders to accelerate cost-effective and proven strategies to improve the energy efficiency of the nation's buildings, manufacturing plants, and multi-family housing. More than 900 organizations take part in the Challenge, but just 16 participants achieved their goals this year.

The challenge sets a 10-year goal of improving energy by 20% over 10 years, but UW Health achieved a 24 percent reduction in just four years. The goal was set in 2013 and achieved in 2017 and the results were calculated and announced this month.

“To come in six years ahead of our goals is a huge accomplishment and shows the dedication and commitment our organization has towards sustainability,” said Mary Evers Statz, UW Health sustainability director. “Our highly engaged staff is key to our success. Our sustainability team reaches across the entire system to look for ways to improve.”

The biggest savings in energy came from retrocommissioning efforts in the larger locations. Retrocommissioning is a process for existing buildings that ensures equipment and systems operate optimally, e.g. . checking the efficiency of the air-conditioning system or switching light bulbs.

UW Health reduced energy costs by replacing older equipment with more-energy efficient equipment, sealing ductwork, and replacing older lights with LED versions. There have been several remodels of University Hospital to upgrade to newer more efficient equipment. UW Hospital was built in the 1970s. Also, physicians have led initiatives to reduce energy and waste in the operating rooms.

The improvement in energy was over approximately 4.6 million square feet of space of the UW Health enterprise.

UW Health, the integrated health system of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, serves more than 600,000 patients each year in the Upper Midwest and beyond with 1,400 physicians and 16,500 staff at six hospitals and 80 outpatient sites.

Through Better Buildings, U.S Department of Energy aims to make commercial, public, industrial, and residential buildings 20 percent more energy-efficient over the next decade. This means saving billions of dollars on energy bills, reducing emissions, and creating thousands of jobs.

More information about Better Buildings Challenge partner results, showcase projects, and innovative solutions is available in the [2018 Progress Report](#).