

Milwaukee Dept. of Veterans Affairs: Honored for energy-saving upgrades that have saved millions of dollars

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MILWAUKEE — Energy-saving upgrades at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center that have resulted in millions of dollars in savings have been recognized with a statewide honor.

The hospital recently received the Energy Efficiency Excellence Award from Focus on Energy, which works with Wisconsin businesses and residents to identify and execute energy-saving projects. The Milwaukee VA was nominated for the award by We Energies. It was one of 10 organizations to receive the honor.

“It’s nice to receive recognition,” said Linda Sue Schwarz, Facilities Management director for the Milwaukee VA. “Energy savings is something that we’re always looking at.”

Working with We Energies, the Milwaukee VA has undertaken several projects, including boiler upgrades, steam trap replacement, insulation upgrades, window replacement and lighting retrofits. The result has been a \$6 million annual reduction in utility bills and savings of more than 52,000 therms and 4 million kilowatt-hours a year.

Lighting upgrades alone saved nearly 21 million kilowatt-hours and touched nearly every room in every building on campus. Ken Dantoin, energy manager for the Milwaukee VA, said it has reduced energy consumption for lighting by 75 percent while increasing the quality of the light.

“This is the culmination of six years’ worth of work,” Dantoin said, noting that the

energy savings alone will pay for the costs of the projects. “It reduces our electrical use, conserves energy and reduces our carbon footprint.”

David Voss, energy adviser for Focus on Energy who worked with the Milwaukee VA, called the project “one of the best” he’s seen in working with the federal government. “It can be used as a model throughout the entire VA.”

[Click here for more information on the award.](#)