

UW-Stout: University's energy conservation project approved

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Menomonie, Wis. – A multibuilding energy conservation project at University of Wisconsin-Stout has been approved by the Wisconsin State Building Commission, part of a \$71 million approval for key projects across the state.

The project will provide a 400-kilowatt rooftop solar photovoltaic array on the General Services Building and Jarvis Hall Tech Wing.

The project also includes LED lighting upgrades in Applied Arts, Harvey Hall, Jarvis Hall and the Sports and Fitness Center; building envelope weatherization improvements in 22 campus buildings; and installing new destratification fans in the Sports and Fitness Center.

The budget is estimated at \$2,767,000. Construction is expected to begin in January 2023, with completion in March 2024.

The engineering design report determined the project will reduce campus annual electric energy purchases by 9% and natural gas usage by 2%. It is expected to save UW-Stout approximately \$172,187 annually. Payback on the cost is expected in about 16 years, estimated Zenon Smolarek, associate director of Facilities Management.

[Sustainability Manager](#) Kadi Wright is excited about the university's continuing efforts to address climate change. "The project will help decrease Stout's carbon emissions by 1,431 metric tons annually," she said. "As a Charter Signatory of the [Carbon Commitment](#), this will help Stout in our commitment to being carbon-neutral by 2050."

The savings will be measured, verified and guaranteed by the Energy Service

Company. [Franklin Energy](#), a conservation consultant that delivers energy efficiency programs for more than 60 utility and government partners across the U.S. and Canada, reviewed the proposal.

The university will also utilize the solar photovoltaic array for student and community educational purposes.

Projects around the state as part of the \$71 million approval will include electrical and water system upgrades; building expansions to improve safety; and landscape enhancements within state-owned facilities such as museums; departments of corrections, health services, military and veterans affairs, and natural resources, as well as various UW System schools.

“These projects are critical for modernizing our state’s infrastructure and helping to make sure our buildings are operating efficiently and safely,” said Gov. Tony Evers in a [recent announcement](#).

Price Commons solar project

A [previous energy project](#), completed in the spring of 2021, added 122 solar panels to the existing 32 panels on the rooftop of Merle M. Price Commons, which houses the main University Dining facility.

The 145 solar panels, with 59.6 kilowatts, generate about 8% of the building’s energy needs and cover 25% of its roof. The project was funded thanks to \$150,000 in student Green Fees, a student campus sustainability initiative.

As part of its efforts, the university [switched from coal to natural gas](#) as its main source of campus heat in March 2020.