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How Retrofits Keep Energy Costs Down

With summer coming, it's important to keep energy costs down. That's why installing building retrofits are key to achieving energy savings. Building retrofits are a whole building analysis and construction process that is said to achieve larger energy cost savings than those of simpler energy retrofits.

Energy performance contracting enables building owners to implement whole building retrofits and significantly lower energy consumption and operating costs. Essentially, the upgrades are paid for through energy savings over time.

Customers can choose from comprehensive energy management (EM) and preventative maintenance (PM), according to Tim Nguyen,

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—John Stoklosa, vice president of Innovative Refrigeration Systems, Inc.

regional vice president of ESI Group USA, Hartland, Wis.

An EM program measures every watt of energy used in a facility, then implements sustainability programs or updates equipment and facilities to reduce energy consumption. The first step of implementing EM is to measure and record energy use to document progress and determine what measures have been most effective. These tracking and reporting sys-

tems monitor energy use rise and fall throughout the day in various graphs and use that information to change practices, start-up times or track down energy use problems. An EM program monitors and controls refrigeration, HVAC, battery charging and lighting systems. Through data collection of individual components, the systems can be repeated or reduced during peak cycles to lessen utility costs.

The advancement of technology has allowed customers to select qualified vendors to design and implement EM specific to their food facilities. For example, ESI has utilized Innovative Refrigeration Systems Inc. (IRS), Lyndhurst, Va., on various projects throughout the country to install, monitor and maintain systems with the specific intent to assist customers to help reduce their energy consumption while achieving the required design capacity.

IRS implemented eConserve, an EM system designed to help companies achieve energy efficiency and cost reduction at their facilities. These systems can be monitored from anywhere in the world via apps that communicate with data logging. IRS's highly skilled team of energy analysts and engineers then interpret the signals and design new cost savings programs as appropriate.

"You're getting daily monitoring, day-to-day energy trend analysis, utility bill metric analysis, meter and weather monitoring and much more, ultimately allowing a company to be as efficient in its operations as possible," says John Stoklosa, vice president of IRS. "[eConserve] was



created to address what has become a very important issue in today's world of industry—how a company can better reduce their energy consumption, define their carbon footprint and save money."

Meanwhile, a PM program allows facilities with multiple and complex systems to save significant utility costs. A regular, documented cleaning and maintenance schedule will help keep equipment running longer and more efficiently. Evaporators and evap-condensers with dirty coils use up to 25% more energy, 11%

more with a bad door seals and up to 100% with leaks. Timely upgrades can minimize long-term replacement costs and operational costs when breakdowns do occur, says Nguyen. Also, investigate and implement energy efficient alternatives in facility equipment, including high-efficient motors, variable frequency drives and efficient filtration devices.

For its part, IRS offers a tracking program called eService, which is a centralized location where companies can access all of their service records, troubleshooting initiatives and work orders at once.

"The eService program improves a company's maintenance visibility and significantly helps them track costs, hours and parts, ensuring that their facilities are running the way they need to be," says Mike McGinnis, president of IRS.

IRS completes this application with eCompliance, a web-based tool

that allows users to securely document Freon inventory, recovery, disposal, maintenance and reclaiming as required by the EPA's Clean Air Act. Serving as a centralized refrigerant management system that includes data storage and reporting tools tailored to current EPA regulations, the app makes any company's compliance program easily understandable for operators, technicians, safety managers and supervisors.

"With this app, all facilities are integrated into the same format, reducing costs and increasing the efficiency of personnel as well as the reliability and sustainability of a customer's nationwide compliance programs," says McGinnis.

"Technologies are always changing," adds Nguyen. "They can look at their forecasts for handling product to ensure they have adequate mechanical systems in place for present and future growth." **ESI**

Retaining Experienced Staff Delivers Quality Projects

ESI Group USA, Hartland, Wis., has maintained an experienced staff of over 50 professionals who have worked to complete nearly 300 projects over the last 25 years. That's why ESI strives to retain each and every employee. However, because of the nature of the business, maintaining a high employee retention rate can be challenging.

"In the food and beverage business, you need highly qualified personnel with hands-on experience to maintain the level of quality required for the facilities we build," says Mike Schwartz, vice president of operations.

Some of ESI's tried-and-true employee retention strategies include competitive wages, 401K with generous match, compensation packages tailored to employee needs and company sponsored continuing educa-

"ESI will continue to stay on the cutting-edge of offering competitive employment packages." —Mike Schwartz, vice president of operations for ESI

tion and state licensing. In addition, traveling employees receive competitive housing, per diem packages and custom scheduling to increase a better work/life balance.

"ESI has seen and felt the challenges of maintaining quality personnel, and will continue to stay on the cutting-edge of offering competitive employment packages to retain the right staff," says Schwartz.

That is why, when employees leave, sometimes they return.

For example, Troy Gough, started

as a project designer for ESI in 1992, which at the time was Environmental Structures.

"I left ESI in 2006 to pursue an opportunity as a project architect for a local competitor. But, in 2008, I was laid off for five months due to a lack of work," says Gough. "My previous boss at ESI offered me an opportunity to come back to work for ESI as a project architect and engage with more clients."

Today, Gough is a senior project architect, and under ESI's leadership, aims to help people in the food industry resolve their facilities' issues.

"Even though I am an architect by trade, I am a professional in the food industry," he adds. "I have worked with food my entire life, and that is what I want to do for the rest of my career." **ESI**

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