

Chicago White Metal saves energy with a high-efficiency furnace



Photo credit: Chicago White Metal

Manufacturing energy savings by thinking outside the mold



Project description:
High-efficiency furnace installation



Total energySMART incentives:
\$12 million provided to businesses since 2011



Total energy savings:
20 million therms/year saved by businesses since 2011

Chicago White Metal Casting, Inc. produced their first die casting in 1937, over 75 years ago. Today, they operate as a family-owned business committed to expanding the industrial manufacturing sector with new technologies. They're a leader in diversifying its customer base by shipping a wide range of aluminum, magnesium and zinc die casting to automotive, aeronautical and medical companies around the world.

Accounting for one-third of all end-use energy in the United States, the industrial sector consumes more energy than any other sector.³ Chicago White Metal recognizes the tremendous opportunity to minimize energy use in this industry and participates in ongoing initiatives including energy reduction, waste water reduction, air emission reduction, hazardous material reduction and paper recycling.



The project

When Chicago White Metal researched opportunities to replace their furnace in 2013, the business was using a 1970's reverberatory furnace. Chicago White Metal worked with energySMART, a Nicor Gas program, to replace the underperforming equipment with a high-efficiency furnace that typically improves efficiency by 40 to 50 percent.⁴ With the help of energySMART incentives, Chicago White Metal installed a new stack melting furnace in March 2014 and received an incentive check in August 2014.



How Chicago White Metal made it happen

Striko Westofen, manufacturer of an energy-efficient aluminum melting furnace, introduced Chicago White Metal to energySMART. energySMART furnace incentives enabled Chicago White Metal to make the equipment investment.

Chicago White Metal dedicated a team to work with energySMART from start to finish. The team collaborated with energySMART to find the best energy-saving opportunity and completed the project by customizing an incentive that enabled Chicago White Metal to purchase and replace the stack melting furnace.

“We are extremely pleased with the experience we had working with the energySMART team. We have consistently enjoyed very positive and professional exchanges.”

– Eric Treiber, CEO of Chicago White Metal

The experience

Before working with energySMART, Chicago White Metal felt the challenges of replacing their furnace. Casting equipment, Computer Numerical Control machines and other essential tools represent large capital costs. Not wanting to risk disrupting production with this expensive purchase, Chicago White Metal needed to be sure they were investing in reliable equipment.

Today, Chicago White Metal sees the benefits of energy efficiency. The equipment not only enables the production of excellent quality materials that expand the business, the dollar-per-therm financial and energy-saving ratio was crucial to Chicago White Metal's ability to complete the project.

“energySMART was the pathway that allowed us to make a critical investment to significantly impact and reduce our natural gas consumption. Chicago White Metal is extremely proud of our new furnace installation, and it certainly would not have been possible without the financial support of the energySMART team,” said Eric Treiber, CEO of Chicago White Metal.

³ www.aceee.org/sector/industrial

⁴ www.moderneq.com/stack-melting.html

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