



Energy
Efficiency
Program

Advocate Health Care System saves energy with custom projects

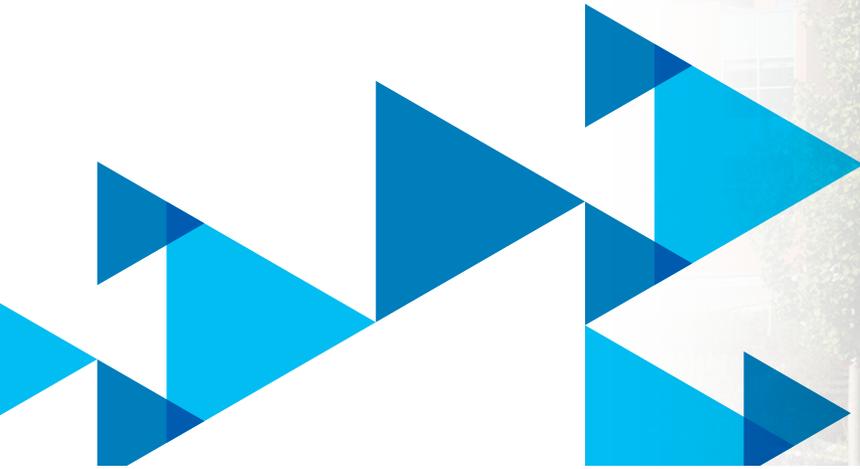


Photo credit: Steelcase.com

Identifying opportunities for innovative energy savings



Total projects:
14 projects



Nicor Gas incentives:
\$453,855 in total incentives

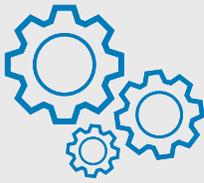


Energy savings:
445,001 therms saved in first year

Advocate Health Care System is one of the nation's top 10 health systems and the largest integrated care system in Illinois. Healthcare organizations are among the largest energy users in the country. ENERGY STAR® estimates that every dollar a healthcare organization saves on energy is equivalent to generating \$20 in hospital revenue or \$10 in medical office fees.² The lesson: energy efficiency allows Advocate to pursue its mission, while also helping them to save energy.

As a nonprofit, it's vital for Advocate to maintain a sustainable operating budget. Advocate has more than 250 care sites, including 10 acute-care hospitals and two children's hospitals, and is among Chicagoland's largest employers with more than 30,000 associates.

Year after year, Advocate has taken advantage of rebates and custom incentives offered through the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program. Rebates help Advocate to complete simple equipment replacements, while custom incentives are used for projects that meet the exact needs their organization and provide larger savings. Many organizations can complete energy efficiency projects that meet their needs while maximizing savings in a short period of time.



The project

In 2010, Advocate contacted the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program to help identify energy-saving opportunities and provide technical expertise to implement possible energy efficiency projects at their facility. Advocate made energy efficiency a priority when they realized the financial savings that could be achieved through rebates offered through Nicor Gas.



How Advocate made it happen

Advocate started with the easy-to-implement project of replacing pre-rinse spray valves across five kitchen and cafeteria locations. Over the next two years, Advocate completed three steam trap projects, replacing 20 medium- and high- pressure traps. By 2013, Advocate also participated in the steam trap survey offering, through which they received \$3,704 in rebates to help cover the cost of steam trap surveys at two of their hospitals.

Motivated by the success of the completed energy efficiency projects, Advocate added the custom incentives offering to its energy-saving efforts in 2012. Custom incentives give businesses the flexibility to complete unique energy efficiency projects specific to their building. With the help of our program's technical expertise, Advocate completed high-efficiency burner replacements at four of their hospitals.

Advocate also partnered with the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program to install boiler controls in 2013. With incentives totaling more than \$444,997, the average payback period for each of the custom projects is less than three years.

“Nicor Gas has been vital to Advocate’s operations. The rebates are key to decreasing payback periods for projects, making it much easier to get the projects off the ground.”

– Austin Rennick, PE,
LEED AP BD+C, Manager
of energy solutions

The experience

“A side benefit of it was that the rebates also acted as a roadmap for facility operators, showing them where to begin when looking to decrease energy consumption,” said Austin Rennick, PE, LEED AP BD+C, manager of energy solutions, Advocate Health Care System. “We’ve utilized custom incentives for large renovation and retrofit projects. These rebates allow us to implement large- scale projects to improve the operating efficiency of our buildings and, in turn, greatly decrease our operating expenses.”

Advocate experienced financial benefits due to the versatility of rebates and the technical assistance provided by the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program. Cash incentives helped their facility operators prioritize energy efficiency measures, launch projects and decrease project payback periods. The availability of rebates for immediate improvements and larger incentives for custom projects helped Advocate complete a wide range of energy efficiency projects easily. Nicor Gas helped Advocate with the application process and explained additional opportunities for energy savings during their free site assessments.

*Source: energystar.gov/ia/business/challenge/learn_more/Healthcare.pdf

Visit nicorgas.com or call
877.886.4239 to learn more.

