

Setting Environmental Priorities on Campus

Idaho State University (ISU) in Pocatello celebrated 100 years of change, growth and educational service by recognizing its past, evaluating the present and looking towards the future. The university prides itself on an established and ongoing legacy of educational quality and community service. Since energy conservation can free fiscal resources for educational purposes, ISU leadership believes that every effort should be made to control energy consumption on its campus.

In 1998, in an effort to reduce their coal-based, natural gas and electricity demand, ISU partnered with the Idaho Energy Division to create a program to improve the monitoring and measuring of campus energy consumption. To date, ISU has completed lighting retrofits on more than 1.1 million square feet of academic building space, accounting for approximately 80 percent of the 1.3 million square feet committed. ISU is presently upgrading an additional 219,000 square feet of student housing and auxiliary buildings on the 1,000-acre campus.

University Takes Action

Through its partnership with Rebuild America, ISU has focused on four areas of energy conservation – improvements in operations and maintenance procedures, installation of energy-efficient equipment, increases in

building efficiency through architectural modifications, and continuous education through seminars and workshops. Each of these areas is part of an energy conservation program developed to take advantage of new technology and financial assistance.

“The buildings selected for energy improvements – the Life Science Complex and the Colleges of Education, Fine Arts and Business – are those that offer the greatest potential for energy savings and have the quickest payback,” says Campus Engineer Syed Hashim.



1.1 million square feet of the Idaho State University campus has been retrofitted, saving \$90,000 a year.

Realizing that the most important partners are the building operators and that their support is vital to the success of the program, ISU has involved these partners in the identification and implementation processes. The program helps maintenance workers identify and initiate oper-

PARTNERSHIP FACTS

- **Total Building Area Retrofitted**
1.1 million square feet; 219,000 square feet underway
- **Total Energy Investment**
\$230,000
- **Total Energy Savings**
7,489 MMBTUs
- **Total Annual Cost Savings**
\$90,000

ational energy-conservation procedures and includes an emphasis on the inspection of new and used equipment.

Creating Support for an Energy-Efficient Campus

“When energy conservation projects began, faculty and staff were not supportive; in fact, they resisted project implementation by sending negative letters to the president and making life difficult for other workers,” explains University Director of Physical Plant Darrell Buffaloe.

Finally, ISU realized that they needed to help the faculty understand that energy conservation did not mean that they would be working in areas that were either too hot or cold, or in poorly lit areas. “We assured them that the energy systems that supported their space were

working efficiently,” Buffaloe says. “By replacing many of the older controls, and in some cases the entire HVAC system, we were able to make their working environment more comfortable. We installed new energy-efficient lighting and reduced the number of lamps in many of our offices and classrooms.”

Most employees preferred the new lighting, Buffaloe says. “In the two cases where the administrative employees did not like the new lights, we modified the location of the lights to meet their needs. Once other employees saw the new energy-efficient lighting, they became anxious to have it installed in their areas.”

These days ISU faculty, staff and students are excited by the prospect of overall energy efficiency. They realize that with a little energy-conservation education, hard work and compromise, both the quality of an ISU education and the university’s reputation as a committed energy-efficient advocate can lead to a brighter future.

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— **Darrell Buffaloe**
Director of Physical Plant



The faculty eventually realized the benefits of energy renovations in buildings like this ISU hall.

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