

# ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL

CASE STUDY  
MINNESOTA

## BIG MONEY SAVED THROUGH MASSIVE LIGHTING UPGRADE



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**Suzanne Savanick Hansen**  
Environmental Sustainability  
Manager

Upgrading lighting equipment is always a smart first step in improving a building’s energy efficiency. At Abbott Northwestern Hospital, they’re no strangers to reducing their energy use and receiving Xcel Energy rebates as incentive.

When it came time to replace outdated lighting in the hospital, they tackled the job one floor at a time.

“We’ve saved about \$200,000 per year in LED lighting upgrades over the last several years,” says Smith Bradley, Facilities Manager. He says that the lighting infrastructure in the 1920’s building was incredibly dated.

The project, funded by the Abbott Northwestern Hospital Foundation, involved swapping out old technology with new high-efficiency LED lighting tubes on their 8-floor facility. The retrofit resulted in 2-million kilowatt-hours of annual energy savings and earned them more than \$70,000 in rebates.

“We’re remaking the hospital’s lighting system entirely,” explains Bradley. “There are several areas of the hospital where the lights are on all of the time, so we had to make them as efficient as possible.”

Abbott Northwestern enrolled in Xcel Energy’s Commercial Efficiency program in 2014 and has accomplished big projects and energy savings over the years.

“With a huge campus and multiple buildings, they always have something happening,” says Scott Kurtz, Xcel Energy account manager. “I tell them what projects qualify for rebates and how much they can save, and they tell me what they’re going to do next. We work with the contractor to execute the project and fill out the rebate paperwork. We try to make it as easy as possible for the customer.”

“Scott is outstanding in supporting us,” Bradley says. “He’s always available to answer questions and helps us through the whole journey.”

### Sustainability Team

Abbott Northwestern Hospital parent company, Allina Health, has created a Sustainability Team to help all its properties save energy and money, including Abbott Northwestern, Mercy, and United Hospitals, as well as several clinics. Suzanne Savanick Hansen, the Environmental Sustainability Manager keeps track of the savings across the health care system.



### PROJECT PROFILE

Project	Upgrade all hospital lighting to LED tube lighting
Estimated project cost	\$250,000
Xcel Energy rebates	\$70,000
Total annual energy savings	2 million kilowatt hours
Total annual cost savings	\$187,200
Payback term	1.5 years

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“From 2014 to 2020, energy efficiency work saved us \$7 million dollars system wide,” Hansen explains. “Energy efficiency is the best use of our sustainability dollars because there are cost savings and environmental savings. There is a tangible public health benefit to reducing air pollution, which helps our patients with asthma and other respiratory issues and benefits the communities we serve.”

Hansen says Allina Health is working on establishing a system-wide energy committee to create a road map for the future and prioritize projects.

“My role is a facilitator and champion for sustainability initiatives that we can do at the site level so our facility staff can concentrate on keeping the place running,” Hansen says. “In addition to Xcel Energy rebates, I’m constantly applying for grant or foundation money—anything that can help us do more to benefit our patients, employees and communities.”

**The Bottom Line**

Bradley advises anyone thinking about energy efficiency work to start with replacements. He says by the end of 2022, they won’t have incandescent fixtures left because they are 100% LED lamps.

One of Abbott Northwestern Hospital’s next projects is to replace parking ramp lights with 10-year LEDs, and then they’ll review the corridor lighting.

“As Allina Health’s flagship, we are committed to always being more efficient,” Bradley says.



For more information about Xcel Energy’s rebate programs, please visit [xcelenergy.com](https://www.xcelenergy.com).