

# SOUTH WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

CASE STUDY  
MINNESOTA

## ENERGY-EFFICIENT MOTORS MAKE GOOD BUSINESS SENSE



When it comes to making energy-efficient upgrades in a school system, changes are sometimes made one item at a time, due to planning, budgets and other considerations. But when Facilities Director Kwame Ayim learned he could bundle a project and replace three aging motors on walk-in coolers at three different elementary schools and be eligible for Xcel Energy rebates, he was all in.

Ayim works regularly with his Xcel Energy account manager, Albert Joe, to determine energy-saving opportunities at buildings throughout the district.

“Al always gives us good information,” Ayim says. “He’s great about sharing information, quickly answering my questions and then letting me ultimately make the choice.”

Joe informed Ayim that through Xcel Energy’s Cooling Rebate program, he could purchase new energy-efficient ECMs (electronically commutated motors) for his walk-in coolers at three different elementary schools. Ayim would have done the work separately, but the bundled rebate enabled him to complete the work all at once.

“Our old motors needed replacing anyway, but the rebate made it a win-win for us,” Ayim says.

The overall cost for the new motors was \$1,615 or \$538 per ECM. Xcel Energy rebates of \$420, or \$140 each, reduced the cost by about 25 percent. Ayim says the decision to move forward was easy.

“Everything we do now is based on energy efficiency because the cost savings are substantial,” Ayim says. “We are trying to maximize our systems and cut costs wherever we can.”

Next on the to-do list is replacing chillers at two local middle schools and installing new building automation systems at three local high schools. Ayim plans to continue working with Xcel Energy to determine other ways to save for years to come.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS	
Project	Install ECMs on walk-in coolers at 3 schools
Project cost	\$1,615 (\$538 each)
Xcel Energy Rebates	\$420 (\$140 each)
Estimated annual energy savings	1,500 kWh / \$185