

Drive Efficiency the Non-Profit Way



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GARY PEDERSON
Director of Donor Services

When you’re a non-profit organization you have to be resourceful and make decisions that maximize your operating budget. Some of those decisions are obvious. Some take discovery. This is an example of how a not-so-obvious choice helps the Greater Twin Cities United Way make the most of their operating budget.

Gary Pederson joined the Greater Twin Cities United Way in 2008 as Director of Donor Services. However, he quickly realized the 68,000 sq. ft. facility was in need of a few energy efficiency upgrades. Although not part of Pederson’s immediate responsibilities, he took the initiative to get the energy efficiency ball rolling.

Pederson started by replacing outdated light bulbs with energy-efficient bulbs. Once that was wrapped up, Pederson decided to bump the project up another level, so he reached out to a local engineering firm.

Soon after a consultation with the firm, the air conditioner and air handler (both of which were installed in the 1960s) were replaced with energy-efficient units.

The engineers suggested installing variable frequency drives (VFD) on the wall fans of the newly-installed air handler – an upgrade to the upgrade. A VFD is a small device used to help control the speed and torque of air conditioning units by varying motor input frequency and voltage. VFDs are used in commercial and industrial settings where the climate in a large space needs to be controlled. With 68,000 sq. ft. of space, the Greater Twin Cities United Way qualified.

Two 15 horsepower VFD drives and 32,665 kWh less energy later, Pederson can proudly say, “Not only do we have more control over the system, but since the upgrades we’ve been under budget on electric usage.” As far as money saved, the addition of the two VFDs is projected to save the Greater Twin Cities United Way \$3,200 annually. That, combined with the \$2,500 in Xcel Energy rebates, creates a payback window of less than 17 months.

As you can see, a not-so-obvious, small energy efficiency upgrade can be a big bonus. You don’t have to be a non-profit to get on board with that.

For more information, visit xcelenergy.com/MotorEfficiency for more VFD case studies, or contact our energy efficiency specialists at **1-855-839-8862** or energyefficiency@xcelenergy.com.