



SUCCESS STORY

NEW HEALTHCARE CAMPUS IN MILFORD SAVES \$9,000 A MONTH ON ENERGY BILLS

A Triple Win for Nationwide Healthcare Services, its Tenants, and the City

Nationwide Healthcare Services is a leading healthcare provider which owns and operates healthcare facilities in Pennsylvania and Delaware. The company provides post-acute and long-term care to residents at each of its campuses and also leases space to wellness-focused clients.

When Nationwide Healthcare Services purchased the former Milford Memorial Hospital in Milford, Delaware, the buildings' systems and controls were still set up for hospital use and occupancy rather than mixed commercial use. This wasted a substantial amount of energy and left Nationwide's leadership with a challenge: a \$50,000 utility bill each month with no occupancy or generated revenue to offset the costs.

"There were so many systems, from humidification and dehumidification to variable settings on motors and drives, and so many vastly different operating mechanisms in the way things were set up," said Darren Cornish, Nationwide Corporate Director of Facilities Management. "You couldn't appreciate it unless you were here from the start."

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, inadequate sensing, monitoring, and control operations in commercial buildings lead to significant energy waste. With improved building controls, it is estimated that annual building energy usage could be reduced by close to 30 percent.

Breathing New Life into Old Buildings

In late 2019, Nationwide contacted the City of Milford about how to lower energy usage on their new campus. The city introduced them to Efficiency Smart, a service that helps residents and businesses save money by using less energy.

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Darren Cornish
Nationwide Corporate Director
of Facilities Management



36%

electric consumption
reduction in six months



more than

\$100,000

in annual electric cost savings

Efficiency Smart sent a team to the campus to assess the situation. Over the next several weeks, Efficiency Smart worked in collaboration with Nationwide's owner, facilities team, and mechanical contractor to monitor and analyze the buildings' automation controls and mechanical systems. Within six months, the electric bill was cut in half and monthly electric consumption was reduced by 36 percent.

"By understanding Nationwide's needs and how they use energy, we were able to identify several opportunities for them to make system adjustments at no cost," said Tim Stearns, Lead Engineering Consultant for Efficiency Smart. "When it comes to optimizing the energy efficiency of building systems, we first look for systems that can be turned off or turned down before recommending investments in maintenance and replacement equipment."



Based on the findings, Cornish was able to turn off several building mechanical systems and use others more efficiently by minimizing power when it wasn't needed. Efficiency Smart also provided financial rebates to help reduce the cost for Nationwide to purchase more efficient equipment. During the first five months following the adjustments, Nationwide achieved 430,000 kWh in energy savings or more than \$100,000 in annual electric cost savings.

Common Solutions for Diverse Tenants

Nationwide's tenant businesses—including treatment centers, fitness centers, medical daycares, and a 100-bed skilled nursing center—offer valuable supplemental support to patients and caretakers. However, they represent a broad spectrum of needs and requirements, which complicates the picture of how facilities teams can adopt cost-effective energy efficiency measures.

Fortunately for Nationwide, their partnership with the City of Milford and Efficiency Smart has made a huge difference in the presentation and buildout of the leased space. It has also led to direct benefits for its tenants: new LED lighting systems and air handling units that save energy and provide an inviting workspace for their staff and customers.

"What we learned from the tenant buildouts and the relationship with the City of Milford and Efficiency Smart pushed us to do LED lighting in every buildout," said Cornish. "It certainly opened our eyes on how to approach our larger capital plan going forward."

According to ENERGY STAR, lighting makes up 17 percent of all electricity consumed in U.S. commercial buildings. LED fixtures last longer and can provide up to a 45 percent reduction in energy use compared to fluorescent fixtures. This can translate into big savings, particularly when you consider the vast number of fixtures at some commercial facilities.

"Nationwide bought this hospital campus with the intent to support the Milford community and it has definitely provided a unique opportunity to partner with local organizations to save on energy costs," said Cornish. "Whether you're considering something similar or a manufacturing facility or whatever the case may be, I would absolutely recommend Efficiency Smart. For us, it has been a very rewarding relationship."

Set Up an Efficiency Program Today

The City of Milford Electric Department is one of the municipal electric utilities that takes advantage of the Efficiency Smart program to lower energy usage for commercial and residential customers. Since 2011, Efficiency Smart has helped residents and businesses use less energy and save money in more than 60 communities in four states. For more on how your business or community can engage, please contact us.