

Green Initiatives in Healthcare

Compelling reasons to institute green initiatives in health care facilities come in different forms. The healthcare industry is by far one of the more important areas that can benefit from green building construction, upgrading and maintenance. Green hospital buildings can be healthier for the patients, doctors and nurses by using less energy and water and reducing the impact on the local and state environments.

Studies have shown by instituting energy efficient lighting projects as part of a facility's green initiative program, patients and staff in green hospitals have greater emotional well-being, patients require less pain medication and have shorter hospital stays due to improved lighting levels.

“When older lighting systems were designed, the topics of energy conservation and savings were not the critical issues they are today,” said Tom Johnson, Vice President of Sales, and Progressive Lighting & Energy Solutions located in Tustin, California. “We design energy-efficient lighting system for medical centers and hospitals by reducing their lighting load and harmful air emissions. Medical Centers and hospitals not only earn energy cost savings they also enhance the reputation of their facility. The entire facility can take pride in doing their part to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.”

Mr. Johnson goes on to say that “Hospitals and medical centers are unique in that they are structures that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, So opportunities for decreasing energy consumption and energy costs that do not impact the employees or the care of the patients can be implemented quickly and successfully”.

In one instance, according to Mr. Tom Johnson, *Orange Coast Memorial Medical Center of Fountain Valley, California* commissioned a lighting upgrade program with Progressive Lighting and Energy Solutions that resulted in a 40 percent reduction in lighting energy consumption while dramatically improving lighting levels for patients and staff. The Medical Center experienced an energy reduction from 1,801,964 kilowatt-hours (kWh) to only 1,078,664 (kWh) usage. In addition, the Medical Center reduced energy demand by 83 Kilowatts (kW) and carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions were reduced by 867,960 pounds annually.

“The improved lighting conditions enhance our quality of care and overall reputation as a first-class hospital organization” said Marcia Manker, chief executive officer, *Orange Coast Memorial Medical Center*.

In addition to changing existing lighting fixtures to more energy efficient lamps and ballasts, infrared occupancy sensors can be installed to control the lighting in offices, laboratories, and non-clinical spaces. The sensors detect both heat and motion and include a 10 or 15 minute timer with override controls. Medical centers can install wall mounted sensors in office and

small occupied spaces and ceiling-mounted sensors in hallways, large classrooms and bathrooms. Facilities can estimate that the sensors alone will decrease lighting energy use by additional 10 to 25 percent depending on the location.

Healthcare facilities that create a green initiative program target two important goals. First, it's the right thing to do to contribute to the environment and patient's well-being and secondly, it has a positive impact on the facility's bottom line.

Randy Parole, CEO/President, Progressive Lighting & Energy Solutions, Inc. Tustin, CA 92780
www.ProgLighting.com