



PITTSFIELD TEAMS UP WITH AMEREN ILLINOIS TO TREAT ENERGY WASTE

Managing waste is all in a day's work at the Pittsfield, Illinois, wastewater treatment facility. But these days, the facility is proving that energy waste need not be part of that equation.

Aeration systems play a critical role in day-to-day operations by supplying oxygen to the microorganisms that break down organic matter into harmless byproducts.

"We need oxygen to breathe, and so do the bacteria. We have to keep an eye on oxygen levels at all times," explains Plant Director Terry Leahr. "It's kind of like loading a moving train — it can be challenging."

Things became even more challenging when a 1980s-era blower broke down in the fall of 2018. Wasting no time, Leahr reached out to Power Supply Industries (PSI) to talk about a replacement.

As an Ameren Illinois Program Ally, PSI was able to connect Leahr with a state-of-the-art system — and cash incentives to offset the cost.

"Through our Energy Efficiency Program's Custom offering, we were able to cover 60 percent of the Pittsfield water plant's project costs," says Ken Woolcutt, Energy Efficiency Manager for Ameren Illinois. "We're proud to help public facilities and other organizations get the most bang for their energy buck."

"I didn't have to do much after that first phone call," adds Leahr. "Ameren Illinois and PSI made it simple for us."

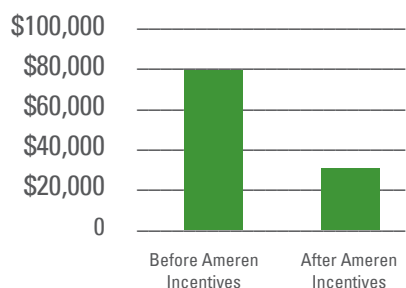
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Within weeks, the project was complete, and savings soon began showing up on the plant's power bill. In fact, this single project will save the city of Pittsfield more than \$21,000 a year in energy costs — savings that helped fund the hiring of additional staff.

Along with those savings came operational efficiencies. "The old blower couldn't be controlled with any type of variable frequency drive, so it ran at full speed all the time," says Leahr. "The new system allows us to control the speed of the blowers, so they only run when needed."

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— Terry Leahr, Director,
Pittsfield Wastewater
Treatment Facility

That newfound efficiency may have helped earn the plant a nod from the Environmental Protection Agency as one of the state's best operated activated sludge plants in 2018.

"We do the best we can to make sure the plant looks nice and is running well," says Leahr. "This was a great project, and I absolutely recommend that other facilities take advantage of the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program. It's a good deal for a small community."

Energy Efficiency Pays

Since 2008, the award-winning Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program has provided millions in incentives to help business, nonprofit and public organizations reduce their annual energy costs. Incentives are available for a variety of energy-saving projects, including lighting, heating and cooling, refrigeration, motors, steam system improvements, and compressed air.

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