



Energy Efficiency PROGRAM

Networked Lighting Controls Pay Dividends for Champaign Bank



Right in the heart of town, you'll find a bank with heart — First Federal Savings Bank of Champaign-Urbana. From sponsoring little league teams and local children's theatre to funding local charities, First Federal Savings Bank is proud to invest in its hometown while helping customers of all kinds reach their financial goals.

Like First Federal Savings Bank, Ameren Illinois knows a thing or two about investing in customers and communities.

"Every year, through our award-winning Energy Efficiency Program, Ameren Illinois provides millions of dollars in cash incentives to help individuals, businesses, and nonprofits save energy and money — savings that contribute to quality of life," says Jim Dillon, Senior Manager, Energy Efficiency Operations at Ameren Illinois.

First Federal Savings Bank initially learned about the Program from an HVAC contractor making a service call for the bank's troublesome HVAC system. The bank soon began working with the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program and received substantial incentives to upgrade the outdated HVAC system, leading to the addition of an advanced network lighting control system as well.

With the HVAC system under control, Operations Manager Matthew Chappell set his sights on the bank's lighting, which was plagued by burned-out bulbs, inefficient fluorescent lights in varying colors, and lights operating when they didn't need to be.

"LEDs are the wave of the future. We had thought about installing LEDs in our building for a long time, but we couldn't justify the costs of the upgrades."

— Matthew Chappell,
Operations Manager

Fortunately, Ameren Illinois' Lighting Program — and a Pilot program for Networked Lighting Controls — helped to move the upgrades off the back burner.

"We discovered that Ameren Illinois has a really good program for lighting," says Chappell. "Ameren Illinois incentives were the deciding factor in this project. In fact, incentives covered more than half of our project costs."

Working with the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program and Program Ally, Alpha Controls & Services, in 2021 the bank completed a state-of-the-art lighting project that will help reduce energy costs and its impact on the environment. New, long-lasting LEDs bulbs and fixtures were installed throughout the 31,755-square foot building, as well as the parking lot and building exterior.

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TAKE CONTROL OF LIGHTING

Did you know that a networked lighting control system can save your facility up to 70% in lighting energy costs? Thanks to advancements in technology and new resources and rebates, it's never been easier to incorporate lighting controls into your facility.



With networking and luminaire-level dimming, the controls can save up to twice that of regular occupancy controls.

LEDs: A BRIGHT IDEA

Lighting upgrades are often the easiest and most affordable way to save energy in a business. High-efficiency LED lights can reduce energy use by up to 50% and can last up to 25 times longer than conventional lighting options. The Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program offers generous cash incentives on a variety of LED lighting upgrades and projects.





DEPENDING ON THEIR LOCATION AND USAGE, INDIVIDUAL FIXTURES ARE EQUIPPED WITH A VARIETY OF CONTROLS:



Timers turn off lights at pre-set times



Dimmers allow users to adjust the level of light in indoor areas



Occupancy Sensors detect activity in indoor areas and turn lights on or off when someone enters or leaves a room



Motion Sensors automatically turn outdoor lights on when they detect motion and turn them off a short while later



Photo Sensors prevent outdoor lights from operating during daylight hours. Indoors, the fixture brightness adjusts depending on the amount of sunlight coming in from the windows.

READY TO BEGIN?

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1.866.800.0747

“The lights were always on in the restrooms and even unused offices, and that led to a lot of energy waste,” says Chappell. “Now we have occupancy sensors so lights will never remain on in an empty room.”

The dimmable LED bulbs are perhaps the most popular feature among bank employees, many of whom found the previous office lighting too bright.

“Different employees have different wants and needs,” says Chappell. “Our ability to customize lighting levels for employees is a huge benefit. The work environment here is that much better, and that means a lot to our employees.”

Beyond bulbs, First Federal Savings Bank also installed a new system to automatically control and manage their lighting usage and costs — inside and outside the bank. All the lighting is connected to the same software that controls the new HVAC system, giving the bank an unprecedented level of control over energy usage and comfort. The system will also alert them of any maintenance issues and allow monitoring from anywhere.

“Today, we have a lot more control over our building in general, and it’s made things a lot easier on us,” says Chappell. “With both HVAC and lighting on the same system, I can pull up my computer screen and immediately identify any issues and make adjustments as needed.”

“Any lighting upgrade is a great opportunity to install controls to take savings to the next level,” says Dillon. “This hometown bank made the most of this opportunity to update an outdated system and generate savings that will help them remain a positive force in the community.”

As a result of the new LED bulbs and networked control system, the bank reduced its annual kilowatt-hour usage by 113,844 kwh, which will save thousands of dollars a year. In terms of greenhouse gas reductions, those energy savings are equivalent to taking more than 17 cars off the road for an entire year!

With LED bulbs requiring just a fraction of the energy of conventional bulbs, Chappell estimates the bank has cut energy usage in each office from as much as 500 watts down to 80 watts.

“We’ve added to employee comfort while saving energy, money, and service calls... Without Ameren Illinois, we wouldn’t have been able to do it.”

— Matthew Chappell,
Operations Manager

As an added bonus, the long life of LED bulbs and reduced operating time due to the advanced controls mean Chappell and his team will have more time to focus on other priorities.

“We were constantly changing light bulbs before. The new LED lights last 10 years, so now we can focus on other projects, he says. “We’ve added to employee comfort while saving energy, money, and service calls. The incentives for both the HVAC and the lighting controls projects were very good. Without the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program, we wouldn’t have been able to do either project, and we are really grateful.”



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