

For Medline, energy conservation efforts more than smart business

Mundelein, IL-based Medline Industries has undertaken a company-wide effort to conserve energy and dramatically lower its level of greenhouse emissions. In just one year, the company reports that it has saved more than \$250,000 and reduced greenhouse emissions (of carbon dioxide) by more than 1.7 million pounds.

“We began this effort as a way to save money and energy,” said Jim Abrams, chief operating officer. “Really, many of these efforts are just plain smart business. But it didn’t take long to understand that not only were we saving a tremendous amount of money, we were accomplishing something much more. We were doing something to help preserve and protect our environment. And this is something that we should all be doing.”

Medline began its efforts with a comprehensive review of its energy consumption. The following are just some of the ways Medline reports that it is working to save money and energy:

- **Lighting modifications**
 - Retrofitted its warehouses, manufacturing, production and packaging areas with new high output T5 light fixtures and lamps with on/off auto sensors. This reduced the demand for electricity and added more light for employees – increasing productivity and safety.
 - Installed light sensors in all unswitched offices, closets and restrooms to conserve energy at its Mundelein headquarters. Replaced fixtures and lamps from T12 to T8. Replaced all incandescent floods to fluorescent low-energy floodlights to conserve energy and reduce heat load on the HVAC systems.
 - Exterior parking lot lights were switched to auto on/off sensors from timers to conserve energy and reduce electricity consumption.
- **Recycling**
 - Recycles all corrugated and sorted office paper throughout the entire 1 million-square-foot headquarters. In 2004 Medline recycled 654 tons and through June of 2005 recycled 355 tons.
 - The company’s manufacturing division recycles all plastic parts that do not pass quality assurance. The parts are reground and sold back to the market. In 2004, 199 tons were recycled, and year-to-date for 2005, 168 tons have been recycled.
 - Recycles all waste oil from manufacturing processes.
- **Temperature control and weatherproofing**
 - Resealed the windows and re-caulked the pre-cast exterior wall joints to reduce drafts and load on HVAC systems, which conserves energy.
 - HVAC systems in the office buildings use set back thermostats and free-cooling dampers to reduce energy consumption while providing a comfortable work environment.
 - An updated, automated water chiller system for manufacturing/molding processes provides free cooling to manufacturing when outside ambient temperature reaches 45 degrees or lower.
- **Waste disposal**
 - Installed devices on trash compactors that monitor pressure, ensure a full container, and automatically call the hauler when full. This has reduced expenses by 56 percent by reducing the number of pickups.



In addition to these modifications, Medline has signed up as a corporate participant of www.stopglobalwarming.org.

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