



While this 55,000 square-foot facility cannot lay claim to any official LEED certification, it was designed to minimize energy costs. The HVAC needs of the building are met by a hybrid system that includes two ground-source heat pump well fields, a chiller, electric and propane boilers as well as in-slab radiant heat. The control system automatically selects the most economical energy source. The plumbing system is designed to use reclaimed water for flushing and the lighting is controlled by occupancy sensors.

Saving Resources With Smart Design

Saving energy with smart mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) engineering design isn't just a trend, it's the way that the commercial real estate industry is doing business. According to a recent study, there has been an average 3.9% drop in total commercial operating expenses as a result of the focus on energy efficiency, and that number is expected to climb.

Smith-Goth Engineers, Inc. takes a forward thinking approach when it comes to MEP design, and handles every project with an eye toward sustainability. As technology continues to improve, the firm has adjusted their design standards to take advantage of what's available and provide better long-term solutions for their clients. Staying educated on the latest design trends and tools available, the Smith-Goth team continues to provide the functional building designs that they are known for, and are thinking outside the box to produce lower operation and energy costs.

"Smart MEP design will almost always have a positive impact on our client's bottom line over time as it can reduce utility and maintenance costs," Brent L. Courter, P.E., Principal said while also noting, "What works in one building, may not be the most effective choice for another, so we evaluate each building independently and empower our clients to make informed decisions."

Some recent projects that highlight Smith-Goth's approach to sustainable design include the Springfield Regional Police and Fire Training Center, which shows a 30% improvement in energy cost over the ASHRAE Energy standard and was awarded LEED Gold certification; the Doling Aquatic Center, which achieved

energy efficiency in a pool environment and is currently under USGBC review, expected to be awarded LEED Silver certification; and the Dan Kinney Family Center, which achieved 30% improvement in energy cost over the ASHRAE Energy standard and is also in USGBC review, expected to be awarded LEED Silver certification.

"We're excited about the focus in our industry on reducing energy consumption. Our company has always been interested in helping clients improve efficiency and reduce operating costs," Courter added. "The focus placed on making responsible design choices has helped educate building owners and piqued their interest, which creates opportunities for us."

Keeping each client's budget in mind, the team at Smith-Goth offers smart design and reliable results, even on a tight budget. Determining the client's goals and learning what's important to their general operations helps the firm to properly apply its expertise.

"We love a challenge, and when a client comes to us with a difficult design issue, we dig deeper and look for solutions that are unique," Courter concluded. "Our staff is knowledgeable and experienced and we can benefit anyone who is motivated to be energy efficient, regardless of the project size or budget."

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