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Client Success story

Town of Normal, IL Makes Smarter Decisions Around Energy Use & Savings with Energy Manager™

Client

Town of Normal

Geography

Normal, Illinois

Vitals

- Over 50,000 citizens
- Maintain 30 properties and about 1 million square feet
- 17 on facilities staff

Challenges

Tracking utilities and energy use differently in each department without any concrete data

Results

A modern energy management system provides an easier way to track utilities across departments and share data for better decision-making on budgets and more.

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Eight years ago, when Mark Clinch started as Director of Facilities & Energy Management for Town of Normal, IL, energy management was a priority for town leaders.

Mark soon began to see some opportunities pertaining to handling utility bills and managing energy.

"There were about 14 people touching utility bills and paying them and passing them through with various levels of scrutiny, so that was what triggered the initial effort of getting our arms around efficiency and getting the data in a place where we could see trends."

That's when they turned to UtilityTrac™, Brightly's first energy platform, in 2012 to help with visualization, reporting and cost codes to track the utilities in each department and align with their budget.

Adding to Their Credibility

Mark said it didn't take long for using software like this to change not just how they tracked things, but also improve their credibility from facilities to other departments.

"By seeing some successes in what we were doing, we were invited to participate in the budgeting process with the finance department," Mark says. "We were part of the analysis and recommendation, so that was that was kind of a big turnaround, especially for this department."

The Town of Normal was still looking for ways to add to their energy management program, so whenever Brightly released Energy Manager, a next-generation energy management tool, in 2017, Mark says he "more or less begged to get on board with it early."

He said it was the different functions and analytics available, as well as the ease of use, that swayed him. He says there is a lot more functionality with different projects and paybacks to be able to track things even more strategically.

"There's a tremendous amount of data available with utility bills, but in reality, what's the best use of our time to draw out?" Marks says to how Energy Manager helps them focus in. "We can dedicate our time to the analytics for the things we care about."

Lighting Project Difference

One example Mark mentions is a small lighting project where they switched out T12 light bulbs for LED lights.

"We were able to actually identify for ourselves the actual

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Mark Clinch
Director of Facilities & Energy Management,
Normal, Illinois

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performance of what was calculated," he says. "As it turned out, the consumption savings was not as good as the projected consumption savings – but the cost savings was greater."

He says he can now share success stories based on what they discover with each project and self-benchmark.

"You can take the anticipated impact versus the actual and really weigh that out and see it graphically and concisely, so that as these things advance, we have the potential to build our own database and decision-making process," Mark says.

They're not only keeping success inside the municipality, but they've also had opportunities to learn and share outside, too.

"We're in a partnership with the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center at the University of Illinois to help us identify energy conservation opportunities over there that we'll be able to plug in [to Energy Manager]. We also help students in the Sustainable & Renewable Energy department at Illinois State University with projects by sharing our experiences and utility information."

Mark says that with Energy Manager, partnerships like this become possible and provide relevant data to them.

Empowered Energy Saving

With Mark's role filled with responsibilities around budgeting, projects, prioritization and administration, he relies on Brightly as a strategic partner when it comes to energy and facilities management.

"[Brightly] takes something that's otherwise immeasurable or difficult to measure and give us a metric which helps us," Mark expounds. "Much of our world is very built and tangible, which requires many intangible measurements, so products like Energy Manager offer strategic analysis, measurement, verification and the ability to project an honest view of success instead of an assumption."

And with energy data at his fingertips, his and his department's credibility continues to grow.

"It comes back to credibility. Credibility has tremendous potential

to influence positive and meaningful change, especially if data and documentation can be shared," Mark says.

Learn more: Brightlysoftware.com

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