

BUSINESS ENERGY SOLUTIONS

ENERGY EFFICIENCY CASE STUDY:

MARC Community Resources

Middletown, CT



MARC began as a grassroots organization in 1955 spearheaded by eight families desperate for help and support for their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Over the years, the nonprofit has established a far-reaching history of empowering people to realize their dreams and make choices about their lives. Today it is an affiliated chapter of The Arc Connecticut and provides 130 individuals and families in Middlesex County a range of residential, vocational, leisure, advocacy, and outreach services.

CHALLENGE

Like many non-profits, MARC's funding sources are limited and the money is typically earmarked for program support before facility upgrades. When Linda C. Iovanna, president and CEO of MARC, joined the organization in 2015, she quickly realized the programs and infrastructure within the three existing satellite spaces were at capacity. She was also faced with many of the same challenges experienced by business owners who want to centralize operations: access to in-house expertise, time and capital. MARC began searching for a new location and needed a team of experts to help evaluate options and navigate the challenges.

SOLUTION

While the search for a location took longer than anticipated, when the team toured 25 Industrial Park Place in July 2018 it moved ahead with focus and determination.

RESULTS

- A \$35,500 reduction in energy and transportation costs compared to operating 3 buildings
- New heating and cooling units and controls which save more than 45,000 kWh of energy annually
- Lighting upgrades that save an additional 132,000 kWh annually
- Reduced strain on transportation team
- Financial incentives and technical support

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MARC closed on the property in July 2019 after an OPM grant of \$487,500 was secured and People's Bank committed to a construction loan. The build-out designs were specified, revised and revised again. Intending to complete the renovation and build-out by Spring 2020, the team began to prepare for the transition to their new space.

Most of the building's lighting fixtures and systems were original from 1985. The 11 rooftop HVAC units that supplied heating and cooling were antiquated compared to today's standards. Since the floor plan was going to be modified, the lighting needed to be adapted to not only be more energy-efficient, but to accommodate new functions. As soon as MARC closed on the building purchase, the renovation project was put out to bid. Energy Resources, an Eversource-approved contractor, conducted a comprehensive, no-cost evaluation and provided a plan outlining eligible measures, costs and estimated savings. After a review of the plan and walk through of the space, MARC identified high-priority energy efficiency improvements including:

- 11 new rooftop HVAC units with advanced controls that enable MARC to set individual zones throughout the building. The new units are 20% more efficient than the older units and will save more than 45,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of energy annually.
- Replacing 616 lighting fixtures with LED upgrades, which will save more than 132,000 kWh of energy annually and are 60% more efficient than the fixtures replaced and require less maintenance. Each fixture is controlled and the lighting schema was adapted for softer lighting levels as requested by MARC.
- Installation of a cool roof designed to reflect more sunlight and absorb less heat than a standard roof.

Eversource and Energy Resources assisted MARC in securing nearly \$133,000 in Energize Connecticut incentives to offset the project's cost. MARC will finance the remaining \$203,000 in project costs over the next 15 years through the C-PACE program. The project has a 5.72-year payback and will be cash flow neutral for MARC.

And as this project ended, MARC began working with Energy Resources to install a 117 kW solar array to reduce its carbon footprint even further.

While the July 2020 official grand opening celebration was put on hold because of COVID-19, MARC has begun welcoming program participants and staff who are enjoying the new building's benefits.

"The quality of the space we're in now is so much nicer and we finally have the room to do things we couldn't do before. We have a separate cafeteria, an outdoor patio and we're able to move to ancillary rooms for art, music and a beautiful new computer lab, which we were able to build because of the savings. We are also excited to see how the year-after-year energy savings will help us grow and expand. "

- Linda C. Iovanna,
President and CEO of MARC.

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