



Save money with lighting upgrades

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Choosing where to spend money on upgrading building systems can be challenging. So many options to choose from and explore. Lighting upgrades alone can be cost effective. Sifting through all the choices and recognizing savings is hard. Real estate professionals can only choose what brings the highest value per dollar spent.

Lighting retrofits are constantly being held to the ROI and NPV standard before a final decision. Energy Efficiency providers often link lighting upgrades with less cost effective measures to bring overall value to a project. How many years is an acceptable return? How can I receive the highest return for the fewest dollars? What is the cost benefit?

Intelligent lighting design can give businesses some of the best returns for dollars spent. If installed and maintained correctly, these systems can last for the foreseeable future. Blending lighting controls and LED lighting will give you the highest return per dollar spent. Fluorescent T8 fixtures can achieve a payback of under three years, if controlled properly. LED lighting on the other hand, provides a superior payback at under two years.

Like any other system, lighting can potentially be ignored by the facilities staff. Any energy efficiency provider can come in and install systems and give businesses power reductions for two years. It is up to your facility staff to continue to maintain the system. Matching ballasts and lamps are key to the longevity of Fluorescent lighting systems. Careful selection of LED's are key to success. Staff should pay attention to light levels of any lamp, especially LED lamps.

To project savings correctly, Energy efficiency professionals must understand utility rate structures and present them to clients in a responsible way. The four story walk-up is charged differently than the 10-story elevator building. A 10-story building will never receive an acceptable payback from installing only Fluorescent T8 tubes, regardless of how efficient your ballast is. The 10 story building has to justify the work done differently. Is this the best use of dollars spent?

GreenCents Solutions has been in the LED retrofit business for three years. GreenCents has retrofitted conventional T12 and T8 lighting systems in NYC over two years ago with LED replacement lamps. Realized savings has also outperformed projected savings. Light output has stayed stable the past two years as well. Most fluorescents have failed by then! As of June 2011, LED retrofit tubes are cost competitive with fluorescent T8 tubes.

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