



## **Saving on electricity doesn't always require an extensive retrofit**

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In today's economic environment, we're all working to operate more efficiently. The cost of energy is a major expense for property owners, and many are considering costly building improvements to increase the efficiency of lighting, HVAC, and other systems. Before investing capital and time in major building retrofits, consider exploring lower-cost options for operating existing equipment more effectively. The results may surprise you.

Operational improvements, or doing more with the equipment you already own, present the lowest of low-hanging fruit opportunities for energy efficiency. At Kimco, we've invested considerable effort over the past two years to uncover untapped operational improvements. A major area of focus is outdoor lighting controls. Conventional outdoor lighting systems operate during the evening, illuminating parking and other public areas. Traditionally, property owners operated their lights from dusk until dawn by utilizing a combination of manual time clocks and photocells. In many cases these devices, which cost less than \$100, manage thousands of dollars in electric consumption per site and per year. While inexpensive, these controls are limited in their functionality.

At Kimco, we felt there had to be a better approach. We developed a program dubbed "Gateway," which leverages the power of cost-effective electronics to provide property managers with improved site controls.

Here's how it works: At a property, electricity flows through a utility meter and travels to a breaker panel. From there, individual circuits are grouped on a "contactor" - a switch that turns multiple circuits on/off simultaneously. Time clocks or photocells control this switch - turning lights on at dusk and off at dawn. We replaced this older equipment with an Internet-connected electronic controller, through which we can command sections of lighting on and off using precise schedules of our choosing. Property managers access a software dashboard via tablet computers, and can set schedules as well as receive power-loss, energy use, and maintenance alarms.

Kimco is averaging 25% electric savings at our Gateway sites, driven by two factors. By calibrating on and off times, and updating these times as day length changes throughout the seasons, we prevent lights from burning when they are not needed. Through improved control of individual circuits, we turn off portions of light during the early morning hours when tenants are closed for business. The Gateway program has delivered surprising results, all through operational improvements to existing lighting systems. The cost of new controllers is many times less than replacing light fixtures, and drives savings.

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