

Energy Savers Success Story: 7549 S. Essex Avenue Chicago, IL

Building owner: Checkmate Realty and Development

Building type: 4-story, 23-unit brick apartment building

Year of construction: 1925

Heating system: Steam boiler

Heating fuel: Natural gas

Energy efficiency upgrades completed

- Air sealing
- Roof cavity insulation
- Replaced aging, inefficient boiler
- New boiler controls installed, including averaging multipoint remote thermostat
- Water heater replaced with a unit with a 95% efficiency rating
- Insulation of heating and hot water pipes

Projected energy savings

- Projected percent savings on energy costs: 33%
- Projected dollars saved annually: \$13,630
- Projected simple payback: 4.5 years

As a seasoned property manager with more than 25 years in the business, John Brauc of Checkmate Realty and Development knows that making energy efficiency improvements to his property will reduce operating and maintenance costs and provide comfortable apartments for tenants. That's why Brauc worked with Energy Impact Illinois and the Energy Savers program to upgrade his 23-unit apartment building on South Essex Avenue in Chicago.



The heating system and hot water heater for the building were nearing the end of their useful lives, and needed to be replaced. In addition, the boiler was leaking and the building needed a variety of repairs. Brauc wanted to improve the building and reduce energy costs, and Energy Impact Illinois helped him connect with the information and resources he needed to get the work done.

He worked with the Energy Savers program, an Energy Impact Illinois program for multifamily building owners, to identify the best energy efficiency investments for his building. Expert energy analysts from CNT Energy inspected the building and provided a written report recommending cost-effective improvements that could reduce annual electricity and natural gas bills by 33 percent.

Brauc received low cost financing to cover the cost of the recommended improvements. Community Investment Corporation, an Energy Impact Illinois lender, provided a low interest loan of \$85,000, allowing him to invest in several important improvements to the building.

The building was air sealed and insulated, two low-cost improvements that can have a big impact on energy bills. The aging boiler and hot water heater were replaced with energy efficient models and new boiler controls were installed to ensure proper operation. In addition, heating and hot water pipes were insulated.

Brauc says the expert guidance and financing options provided through Energy Savers and Energy Impact Illinois were instrumental in helping him improve the building.

“It would be more difficult to make these improvements to the building without the Energy Savers program,” Brauc said. “They did everything from inspecting the building and recommending the upgrades that could save the most money to helping me find qualified contractors and checking to make sure the work had been done right. On top of that, the financing options made it possible to make investments now that will pay off in the long term through lower energy bills.”

Building owners and contractors who are interested in working with the Energy Savers program can learn more at www.cntenergysavers.org.