

Energy Efficiency in Business

Sault Ste. Marie Schools Save Big
with Lighting Upgrades



Energy Provider: Cloverland Electric Cooperative

Project Location: Sault Ste. Marie

Saving Energy = Cost Savings

➔ **Saved 102,000 kWh/year,
or \$11,600 in energy costs**

- Installed 520 T8 FL light fixtures
- Replaced more than 2,000 standard bulbs with CFLs and LEDs

ACTION

Replaced inefficient bulbs with high-performance, energy-saving models at four area schools

INCENTIVE

\$5,809 in Energy Optimization Program rebates

RESULTS

Highly-efficient lighting which yielded significant savings, freeing up limited funds for other pressing uses

Energy Efficiency in Business

Sault Ste. Marie Schools Save Big with Lighting Upgrades



COMPANY NAME:
Sault Ste. Marie area public schools

ENERGY-SAVING ACTIONS:

- Installed 520 high-performance T8 fluorescent light fixtures in two schools
- Replaced more than 2,000 standard fluorescent bulbs with reduced-wattage fluorescent bulbs in three schools
- Converted most incandescent light bulbs to CFLs, LEDs, or low-wattage induction lights
- Replaced all outdated light bulbs at once instead of waiting for old bulbs to burn out

RESULTS:

- 102,000 kWh/year savings
- Saved \$11,600 in energy costs per year
- Energy savings expected to double in 2014
- Received \$5,809 in Energy Optimization Program rebates

Do energy efficiency improvements add up for schools? Let's do the math. Not only are students and staff more comfortable and focused, but increased efficiency also helps limited funds go further. For these reasons and more, the Sault Ste. Marie area public schools recently completed multiple large-scale lighting projects as part of its ongoing energy-saving efforts.

“Although we had already been doing a great deal to reduce our energy footprint, this project gave us an opportunity not only to achieve additional energy savings, but also the support we very much needed.”

- Larry Perron, Sault Ste. Marie schools maintenance team

With the Board of Education's approval and the superintendent's support, 10 energy efficiency projects were completed at four schools with the assistance of the Energy Optimization Program offered by Cloverland Electric Cooperative. The utility is one of 12 electricity providers offering rebate programs to Michigan homes, farms, and businesses.

PROJECT DETAILS

While the Energy Optimization Program offers numerous rebates for businesses, energy-efficient lighting projects are the most popular as they tend to have rapid paybacks—annual energy savings often offset equipment and installation costs in less than three years. In addition, the lighting industry no longer manufactures T12 fluorescent light bulbs (as of July 2012), which makes finding replacement bulbs challenging.

These factors, along with Energy Optimization Program rebates, motivated Sault Ste. Marie schools to replace lights in four of its oldest buildings.

“We are always looking at ways to improve—by being green schools, staying up-to-date with energy savings and recycling,

and offering water bottle refilling stations, to name a few. This was a great opportunity to bring energy reductions to the forefront.”

- Larry Perron

Two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school in Sault Ste. Marie are on pace to collectively save almost \$12,000 in lighting costs each year with the upgrades completed so far. Energy Optimization Program rebates will further offset initial purchase costs.

The energy efficiency projects were a true team effort between the schools, their electric utility, and the Energy Optimization Program. Together, they achieved great results that have inspired the Sault Ste. Marie schools to tackle additional projects in the future.

“We were most impressed with the great people we worked with from Cloverland Electric and the energy firm that supervised the rebate program and assisted with new projects. They did an excellent job of helping us work through the rebate program, and served as sounding boards for new energy savings within our schools.”

- Larry Perron

FUTURE PLANS

The Sault Ste. Marie schools' maintenance team plans to: replace 90 high-bay lights with ultra-efficient light-emitting diodes (LEDs); upgrade an additional 375 light fixtures from T12 lamps to T8s; and replace the gym lights at both the high school and middle school for an even bigger payback.

To learn more about the energy-saving options available through your electric utility's Energy Optimization Program, call **877.296.4319** or visit michigan-energy.org.