



# Saving Energy in Michigan's Schools

## Westwood Community School District

### Hamilton J. Robichaud High School, Dearborn Heights

*Energy Costs Reduced 25% - With improvements ranging from lighting controls to boiler replacement, Robichaud High School expects to save \$40,120 per year in energy costs.*

In 1995 and 1996, energy efficiency improvements made at the Hamilton J. Robichaud High School in Dearborn Heights reduced its energy costs by 25%. The primary energy reducer was the installation of energy efficient modular boilers to replace older, oversized models. Savings for the boiler upgrade alone accounted for a 27% reduction in natural gas costs.

#### Energy Audit

The boiler upgrade and other energy efficiency measures was identified through a detailed energy audit of the High School. Westwood Community School District hired an engineering firm to conduct the energy audit. Along with identifying methods to cut energy use and costs, the energy audit projected energy savings and estimated paybacks for each energy efficiency measure. Based upon these financial projections, Westwood Community School District made the decision to go ahead with the energy improvement project, which included:

- upgrading gymnasium lighting from 750 watt incandescent lights to energy efficient metal halide lights
- replacing high wattage incandescent downlights in the lobby and corridors with new fluorescent fixtures
- installing photocells and motion sensors in administration and corridor to use day lighting – lights now come on only when there is insufficient light from outside and when people are present
- installing a pool cover to reduce energy losses from evaporation
- replacing the existing 60% efficient boilers with high efficiency boilers

#### Project Cost

The High School project, which cost \$173,220, is accruing estimated energy savings of \$40,120 per year. At that rate, this project will pay for itself in 4.3 years.

#### Funding

Westwood Community School District participated in a U.S. Department of Energy federal grant program which assisted them in funding their energy efficiency improvements at the High School. Although this federal program is no longer available, the Energy Office (EO) of the Michigan Dept. of Consumer & Industry Services has developed a low-cost financing program to allow all public schools in Michigan to obtain financing for energy efficiency improvements.

*Feel free to contact us if you have any ideas for case studies or other questions :*

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