



Building Efficiency

For Commercial and Industrial Projects

The City of Bellevue saves money on its new wastewater treatment plant with help from Idaho Power

The growth of the Wood River Valley has been a boon to its southernmost community. The City of Bellevue's population has risen almost 20 percent since 2000, spurring the city to upgrade its infrastructure and city services, including its wastewater treatment plant.

Brandon Keller of Keller Associates, the Boise engineering firm that designed the new plant, knew Idaho Power's Building Efficiency incentive program could help the city save money on the project and on future electric bills. "We had previously worked with the program on a similar project," Brandon said, "and with the technology we were putting into the plant, we knew it could save Bellevue some money."

Building Efficiency is just one of the many commercial and residential programs Idaho Power offers to help its customers reduce electricity use. Such incentive programs help customers save money twice—first by helping offset the initial cost of energy-saving equipment, and later through ongoing reductions in energy usage.

Variable frequency drives drive savings

The City of Bellevue's new \$5.9 million wastewater treatment plant will benefit from an updated heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. "We installed a four-ton split system HVAC," Brandon explained. Split systems incorporate an indoor unit with a matching outdoor unit connected by refrigerant piping. "They offer a lot of advantages," Brandon said. "They're easier to install and maintain. They're quieter, more cost-effective, more efficient, and one system can heat and cool."

As part of Bellevue's wastewater treatment process, the mechanical plant uses multiple blowers and pumps, each with variable frequency drives (VFD).



Working with city hall

"From our standpoint, [the Idaho Power incentive program] is great," Brandon said. It helps us in our relationships with the cities we do business with." As Brandon pointed out, Idaho Power's Building Efficiency program benefits the city on three levels. "First, they get that immediate incentive, which helps them meet their budgets, and, as we all know, that's pretty important these days," Brandon says. "Second, they're being proactive in making sure their projects are energy efficient and sustainable, and third, they receive savings over the long-term through lower power consumption."



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*– Brandon Keller,
Keller Associates*

“A variable frequency drive can equal big energy savings,” said Sheree Willhite, Idaho Power Building Efficiency Program Specialist. “It regulates the blower speed by reducing the amount of electricity each blower receives.” In commercial applications, it can save a lot of energy and, in Bellevue’s case, ease the stress on a stretched government budget.

The savings

Idaho Power paid the City of Bellevue a \$14,203 incentive through the Building Efficiency program. The four new VFDs added 230 total horsepower (hp) of pumps and blowers and will reduce the City of Bellevue’s energy usage by 187,686 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year, helping to save the city—and taxpayers—\$8,445 in annual electricity costs.

The city’s role in the entire process was simple. “We coordinated with Idaho Power and filled out all the paperwork for the city and got it approved for them,” Brandon explained. “The only thing they had to do was deposit the incentive check.”

Savings are quite common

Saving energy is always a wise choice. The Building Efficiency program assisted the City of Bellevue in saving money for its taxpayers in the form of lower operating costs for the city’s new wastewater treatment plant. Building Efficiency is just one part of Idaho Power’s complete suite of energy efficiency programs.

Using Idaho Power’s energy efficiency programs, customers saved enough electricity in 2010 to power more than 13,500 average-sized homes. That’s an increase of 31 percent over the previous year, and Idaho Power anticipates even greater savings in 2011.

Using energy wisely benefits everyone by preserving natural resources and delaying the need for additional power facilities. It helps Idaho Power’s customers save money and helps the company continue to provide reliable, responsible, fair-priced energy.

How can you participate?

A large and growing percentage of Idaho Power customers take part in at least one of our energy efficiency programs. To find programs to fit your needs, go to www.idahopower.com and select **Energy Efficiency**. We’ll show you how you can reduce your energy use and trim your electric bills.

The above success story was produced in cooperation with, and approval from, the City of Bellevue and Keller Associates.



Working with city hall (continued)

Idaho Power’s energy efficiency incentive programs have advantages for engineering and construction companies that participate in them as well. “We’ve had success with it on a number of projects,” Brandon said. “So we’ll be more likely to push for it with our clients—to be more proactive. With incentives through Idaho Power’s Building Efficiency program, it’s not a tough sell.”