

Geothermal heating, photo voltaic solar panels, grey water use systems, passive solar lighting, low flow fixtures, and auto control lighting. What do all of these items have in common? All are energy efficient systems or practices supported and encouraged for utilization by our own Sustainable Marshfield committee.

Last month, during a Marshfield common council meeting, the City of Marshfield was presented with the Leaders in Energy and Efficiency Design (LEED) Gold Certification for the design of the fire station that included all of these features. This presentation was made by representatives of the architectural firm Short, Elliot, and Hendrickson (S.E.H.) and our construction manager from Boldt Construction. This Gold LEED certification exceeded a minimum contractual requirement of Silver LEED certification and serves as a testament to the high level of commitment by our city regarding sustainability.

The Marshfield fire station is only one of a handful of fire stations in Wisconsin certified to the Gold LEED level. The levels of LEED Certification identified by the U.S. Green Building Council start at LEED Certified, Silver LEED Certified, Gold LEED certified, and end with the highest level of Platinum LEED Certified. The only fire station currently Platinum LEED Certified in Wisconsin is in Madison.

Following a review of utility expenses/use for the old 12,500 square foot fire station as compared to the new 32,900 square foot fire station over the past 17 months, the installation of these features are meeting or exceeding expectations. For example; electrical usage per square foot is 17% less than the old fire station, natural gas usage per square foot is 81% less than the old station, and water usage per square foot is 78% less than the old fire station.

Based on the experience of the Marshfield Fire and Rescue Department, the initial investment in these energy saving features is meeting expectations and will continue to minimize operational costs for many years to come.

Submitted by:

James B Schmidt, Fire Chief
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