

Empire Housing Creates a High-Performing and Comfortable Building for Tenants

Case Study

Building Name & Location:
Moses Dewitt House
Apartments—Syracuse, NY

Solutions Provider:
C.J. Brown Energy, P.C.

Project Size:
1 Building, 37 Units

Projected Annual
Energy Savings:
27%

Projected Annual
Energy Cost Savings:
\$18,161

Background

Empire Housing and Development Corporation, a not-for-profit organization that develops affordable housing across New York State, renovated the Moses Dewitt House Apartments in Syracuse, New York. The property was built in the 1860s, was renovated once in the 1990s, and now needed more work. Moses Dewitt represented a new, different experience for Empire—which up until this project had focused on weatherization projects for single-family homes. Empire’s co-executive director Bob Sekowski noted, “we had been encouraged by the local city government to get more involved in multifamily housing because they identified it as a need here in Syracuse.”

After Empire conducted a physical needs assessment of the property, the need for weatherization and other energy efficiency upgrades came up. Empire looked to NYSEERDA for support and learned about their Multifamily Performance Program (MPP), which provides dedicated support for affordable multifamily property owners and managers to make their properties more energy efficient.

C.J. Brown’s Expertise Uncovered Cost-Effective Savings Opportunities

With MPP, property and building managers can access a network of NYSEERDA-qualified Multifamily Building Solutions Providers, who will conduct an assessment of the property and create a customized plan to reach 20% or more in energy savings.

Through this network and other recommendations, Empire found C.J. Brown Energy & Engineering—an engineering firm specializing in energy based in Buffalo, New York. Despite the distance, C.J. Brown made every effort to be on-site and familiarize themselves with the property and its tenants.

They also helped Empire prioritize the upgrades that offered the best return on investment. Sekowski said, “we concentrated on the things that were going to be the most cost-effective and provide the biggest benefit. So we ended up doing things like lighting, pipe insulation, and low-flow fixtures, boilers, and water tanks.”

“We’re dedicated to providing affordable housing and high-quality housing. MPP is a way to do that, in terms of energy savings for people and how they live. Their utility bills are going to be lower. They’re going to be more comfortable in their apartment. The building’s carbon footprint is going to be reduced.”

—Bob Sekowski, Co-Executive Director, Empire Housing and Development Corporation

Upgrades Implemented:

- Air-sealing
- ENERGY STAR® windows
- Boiler replacement
- Boiler reset controls
- Pipe insulation
- Programmable thermostats
- Direct-fired water heater
- Low-flow faucet aerators and showerheads
- Efficient lighting in units, in common areas, and on building exterior
- Variable frequency drivers on pumps
- ENERGY STAR clothes washers and exhaust fans
- ENERGY STAR refrigerators and range hoods



Results: A Historic Building Made More Modern and Comfortable

The support from NYSERDA and C.J. Brown helped Empire reach 27% in annual energy savings and \$18,161 in annual cost savings. In addition to reducing energy use and costs, Empire increased the performance and comfort of the building. Sekowski noted, “we hear people say how much better the building runs. It’s a more comfortable building, brought up to current standards. It was an older building that maybe looked okay from the outside, but when you got inside you could see all the issues it had. Now it’s good for the long haul and people can live with good quality.”

The NYSERDA Multifamily Performance Program (MPP)

Through MPP, NYSERDA provides incentives from \$700 to \$3,500 per unit for affordable multifamily property owners and managers to make improvements that help lower your building’s ongoing operating costs. A NYSERDA-qualified solutions provider will conduct an assessment of your property and create a customized plan to reach 20% or more in energy savings.

Ready to increase the value of your building and tenant comfort with MPP?

Visit nyserdera.ny.gov/mpp

