



NYSERDA

An Interview:

Swiss Re leads the way as commercial tenants cut carbon emissions

John Clifford, Head of Corporate Real Estate and Services Americas for Swiss Re, one of the largest international reinsurance companies, discusses the recent NYC office upgrades.

Swiss Re channeled sustainability goals into the new LEED-certified office space on 6th Avenue. The space boasts more than an outdoor terrace with Central Park views; it is also energy-efficient and designed to reduce carbon emissions. Working in partnership with NYSERDA, Swiss Re partnered with Robert Director Associates, an engineering consulting firm, to accomplish those goals with style and smart decision-making. In the interview, John shares what the project entailed and how it benefits the company.

Why is energy efficiency important to your company?

The Swiss Re Group is a leading wholesale provider of reinsurance, insurance, and other insurance-based forms of risk transfer. Sustainability and resilience are key topics for all operations, particularly real estate projects, and integration in office design and performance. Swiss RE firmly believes in the importance for a responsible company to minimize its environmental footprint, thus leading by example. Efforts are concentrated in areas such as reducing carbon emissions, increasing energy efficiency, and improving the careful use of limited resources.

What were your main drivers for taking on this project?

The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions have a positive overall impact on the environment in which we all live and work.

What types of measures did you study and/or install?

Swiss Re installed:

- High-efficiency LED lighting
- Solar film on glazing
- Occupancy and daylighting controls
- Energy demand controls to reduce consumption
- Certified ENERGY STAR® equipment and fixtures
- Motion-sensing and automatic water fixtures

Along with the list of recommended measures, a holistic recycling program was installed and achieved overall reduction in the use of paper and plastic.

The IT department set all compatible devices to utilize the “sleep mode” as the default function to reduce energy consumption.

A campaign encouraging employees to use the internal staircase versus the elevator is currently in progress. Vending machines are stocked with fresh and seasonal fruits and similar healthy snacks.

Measures and Estimated Annual Savings

Measure Description	Energy Savings (MMBtu)
Equipment	
 Occupancy Controls	34
Efficient Hot Water Fixtures	3
ENERGY STAR® Equipment	287
Automatic Plug Load Control	71
Computer Sleep Mode	122
Solar Film on Glazing	1,040
Stair Use Campaign	23
Lighting	
 Daylighting Controls	1
Reduced Lighting Power	109
High Efficiency LED Lighting	198
Total Savings	1,890

Now that the project is complete, how are the results comparing to your expectations?

The actual benefits are still being evaluated. However, by reducing the use of steam for the entire building and the use of electricity by Swiss Re, the annual reduction in greenhouse gas emission equivalency is projected to be 115 tons per year and an annual cost saving in excess of \$100,000.

What do you think are the most beneficial results of participating?

Employees consistently express interest in the company's efforts to reduce the carbon footprint, and this ties back to the Swiss RE's global initiative for the environment. Further, employees pride themselves on contributing to the positive difference that Swiss Re makes in its operations and leads by example.

How was your property manager/building owner involved in the process? Were they onboard and interested in working with you for the project?

This property is LEED-certified through the landlord, which fostered a partnership to integrate into project planning. For example, the landlord installed solar film to further reduce overall energy consumption.

Has this process changed your relationship and how you work with your property manager/building owner?

Swiss Re always looks for ways to actively partner and create beneficial working relationships with landlords. This project is another great example of this philosophy.

Does your company have any corporate sustainability goals? Has this project helped work toward achieving those goals?

Swiss Re has a long-standing commitment to corporate responsibility. Swiss Re has been an industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index since 2004 through programs to improve the company's energy efficiency by 2% per year per full time employee and commitment to RE100. Another example is investing in solar plants to help reduce electrical consumption in the company's large facilities in New York and Bangalore.

Energy Efficiency for Commercial Tenants

NYSERDA helps cover the cost of identifying energy-saving opportunities and developing a plan to implement energy efficiency measures in leased spaces.

Discover what programs are available to best suit your needs for reducing costs and energy use in your commercial space.

Visit nyserdera.ny.gov/commercial-mixed-use-buildings for more information.

