

HOW CORPORATE AMERICA CAN SAVE THE PLANET

How can we encourage businesses to make the commitment towards sustainable building practices? Well, to start, at the very least, by showing them the savings that they could make if they invested in green design and technology for their business. Embassy Suites in South Lake Tahoe has this right idea in mind. The second largest Embassy Suites in the country, it serves as a perfect business model of how corporations can invest in green building, save thousands in operating costs, and enhance their public image in the process.



In 2008, chief engineer David Hansen went to the owners of the South Lake Tahoe's Embassy Suites with a proposition. He asked for \$200,000 to invest in energy efficiency programs and guaranteed that in two years he would be able to repay the investment through energy savings. Only seven months later he had already earned back the initial investment, and was given the okay to expand and continue his work, saving the hotel thousands of dollars annually.

Some of the environmental initiatives his team implemented include:

- Passive infra-red and motion detectors which turn on/off heating and cooling installed in all suites;
- A hotel-wide recycling program that earns enough revenue bi-weekly to enable the hotel to switch to plant-based products and limit the use of plastic;
- Efficient light fixtures installed throughout the hotel, including LED lights on all exit signs;
- An Ozone Laundry Cleaning System which cuts cycle time significantly, saving energy and using less water.



Perhaps the program Mr. Hansen feels strongest about is reducing the hotels food waste. After months and months of working with local waste management officials to coordinate this effort, Embassy Suites began a composting program, reducing their trash compactor take away four to one. The hotel's employees are key to the success of this environmental initiative and others, and take pride in working for a business that has made the commitment to reducing its impact on the environment. This basic composting program and other environmental programs can be replicated elsewhere with just a little investment and faith that businesses can make a difference.



Source: <http://www.globalsiteplans.com/environmental-design/how-corporate-america-can-save-the-planet-one-building-at-a-time/>