

DESCRIPTION

Through its 2011 Ramsey County Energy Management and Stewardship Plan, a framework for energy efficiency and conservation in the county is in place, with a commitment to maximizing energy-related investment dollars, reducing energy use, demonstrating environmental steward and managing public funds responsibly.¹ One purpose of the plan is to reduce public health risks. Most of Ramsey County's energy supply has historically come from fossil fuels, the burning of which contributes to air and water pollution.

HOW WE ARE DOING

Energy use is trending down in Ramsey County buildings. In 2008, total energy consumed to heat, cool, operate and provide for energy needs in buildings under county ownership was 317,616 MBTU. By 2015, this annual number had fallen to just over 256,535 MBTU, a 20 percent reduction.²

While energy use is one data point to measure, reporting on that alone doesn't accurately reflect progress towards overall energy management goals. For example, as a single category, energy use includes energy obtained from a variety of sources, while the burning of fossil fuels specifically has a more direct and negative impact on health than does the use of renewable sources of energy. Tracking greenhouse gas emissions is another important measure of sustainability and environmental stewardship. Engagement in the activities outlined in the county's energy plan will enable a more robust analysis of progress toward energy efficiency and carbon reduction goals in the coming years.

BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Minnesota Next Generation Energy Act³: Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

Minnesota Target: 15% reduction from 2005 levels.

WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Ramsey County Property Management provides professional facility management services to 18 county buildings. These buildings represent approximately 70 percent of the 3.2 million square feet owned by the county. Property Management partners with the departments responsible for the remaining 30 percent (Community Corrections, Social Services and Financial Assistance, Parks and Recreation, Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health and the Medical Examiner), providing consultation when requested on building and energy related issues. The County's Energy and Sustainability Coordinator coordinates energy and sustainability functions, work teams, measurement and reporting, projects, and programs.

Since the mid 1990s, Property Management has used a variety of energy saving strategies to its physical infrastructure, including: identifying energy-efficiency opportunities, conducting energy-efficient lighting retrofits in all Ramsey County facilities over 5000 square feet, conducting a design performance calculation based on best available technology for energy-efficiency and resource-use for all new construction and remodeling projects, constructing the new Roseville Library as the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certified building owned by Ramsey County and purchasing and using software to track utility use in buildings.

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Information to note

- Ramsey County has been integrating energy-efficiency measures into county operations for more than twenty years.
- Energy use in Ramsey County facilities is decreasing.

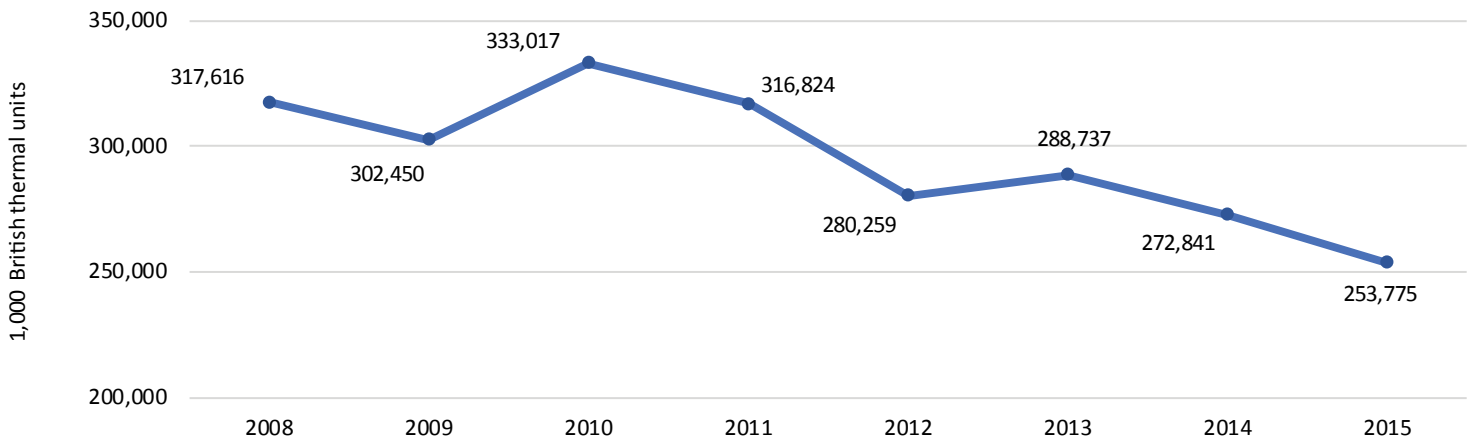
¹ Ramsey County Energy Management and Stewardship Plan. March 4, 2011. http://www.mepec-mn.org/Best%20Practices/policies/ramsey_energy_management_plan_2011.pdf. Published March 4, 2011. Accessed December 29, 2017.

² Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health data set. February 1, 2018.

³ Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. Clarification of the Next Generation Energy Act. Section 216H.03. http://www.mncenter.org/uploads/7/9/3/5/79357940/next_gen_energy_act_f.pdf. Accessed July 2, 2018.

Ramsey County is piloting the use of renewable energy in its Parks and Recreation department, including a “Green Spaces, Green Places” campaign (a commitment to reducing energy use in all department facilities 35% by 2025), an “Energy Week” (to promote energy conservation, use of renewable energy and increased awareness around energy goals), and a “Green Ice” initiative (to reduce energy usage at the county’s arenas).

Energy Use in Ramsey County Buildings



Source: Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health.