

# SYSTEM INITIATIVES

Board of Regents' Strategic Initiatives  
Spring 2012

## SYSTEM INITIATIVE

### Smart Buildings Initiative

#### Description:

Implement a university system-wide energy efficiency action plan that utilizes existing campus resources, including students, faculty, and staff, in order to identify and implement efficiency improvements in the operation of facilities and to produce savings that are reinvested in a self-sustaining energy efficiency program.

#### Rationale:

- 1) Significant cost savings can be realized for the State of Montana and the MUS by improving capacity for energy efficiency work within MUS buildings
- 2) Current efforts to improve energy efficiency throughout the MUS could be expanded and improved with additional resources, organization, coordination, and visibility
- 3) Through enhanced coordination and collaboration, the MUS campuses can draw upon internal expertise to help implement an effective, system-wide energy action plan
- 4) A plan of this nature will increase student experiences and connect academic programs with operational efficiency efforts

#### Details:

##### Campus Resources:

- Provide students opportunities to earn credit and/or internships, receiving hands on experience with energy performance audits and monitoring, building inspection and weatherization, business/financial modeling, economic research... to name a few
- Utilize faculty and staff expertise to connect academic programs with efficiency efforts and provide guidance and leadership
- Draw from the strengths of individual campuses to contribute to a system-wide effort
- Develop connections with energy related academic programs at 2-year as well as 4-year campuses

##### Coordination:

- Provide for "energy manager" and resource conservation specialist positions at the two flagship universities that will oversee planning and implementation of energy efficiency improvements
- Establish an advisory council made of up of students, faculty, energy managers, and other staff from across the MUS to help guide the initiative

##### Funding:

- Start-up funding is required for the first two years to pay salary and benefits for multiple energy managers and provide keystone energy monitoring devices on each participating campus.
- Possible sources: legislative request; utilize current savings; surcharge on utilities; existing facilities budgets, student funds, revolving energy loan fund
- A portion of the savings generated from energy savings will eventually make this program self-supported. These savings will be earmarked by the Board of Regents for reinvestment in the energy efficiency program.

##### Objective/Commitment:

- This initiative will define a specific level or target for energy reduction and cost savings
- Examples:
  - setting five to ten year targets for energy efficiency improvement and cost savings
  - committing to a statewide LEED standard for new buildings
  - specifying a number of LEED-EBOM buildings to be certified by 2025

**MUS Strategic Plan:** this initiative works to further MUS Strategic Plan Goal #3 -- Efficiency & Effectiveness