OUTAGAMIE COUNTY JOINS PUSH TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY
2013 building renovation leaves little waste

Outagamie County is taking sustainability seriously. When it decided to retrofit its 71-year-old administration building, the plan was to minimize waste and maximize demolition materials.

The building, erected in 1942 for $550,155, included 215 rooms, 54 of them jail cells. Despite the construction of 200 windows, totaling 6,000 square feet of glass, the structure featured a heating and ventilating system designed, in the words of its historian, to “provide the comforts in both winter and summer that scientific engineering has now made possible for the office worker.” Technology quickly out-stripped that standard, necessitating 2013 retrofit.

During its renovation, the county diverted 95 tons of structural material from its landfill. Salvageable goods were scoured from the building, sorted and shipped to vendors for recycling. From sheet metal to copper wire, lighting fixtures to ceiling tiles, a well concerted effort was made to limit waste.

Officials expect to realize $25,000 annually in energy savings thanks to innovations in building design and material, including zone sensor technologies.

Likewise, when the county’s old St. Joseph Convent was cleaned out, the county saved the scraps. The result was a windfall for the Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Habitat volunteers nabbed a grab bag of useful stuff, including 70 cabinets, eight furnaces, and 120 feet of functional hand rail, 70 pounds of scrap steel and 307 pounds of scrap copper.

There was a time when scrap material was simply heaped and hauled away. Those days are over. The value of sustainability has never been keener and Outagamie County has proven it is ready to do its part.

From the reclamation of materials from St. Joseph’s, to the completion of Outagamie County regional Airport’s new energy efficient terminal or the expansion of recycling operations at its Tri-County facility, Outagamie County is committed to the principles of sustainability.

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