

7101 WISCONSIN AVENUE  
ENERGY EFFICIENCY CASE STUDY

# Commercial Building Energy Retrofit:

Immediate Payback, Lasting Benefits

22% Energy Cost Reduction | \$121,000 Saved Annually | BEPS-Compliant

## Overview

A 13-story mixed-use commercial office building at 7101 Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, MD, managed by Donohoe Commercial Real Estate, was facing rising operational costs and outdated infrastructure. Originally constructed in 1975, the building's systems were no longer meeting modern performance expectations or tenant comfort standards.

Recognizing these challenges, Donohoe partnered with Spectrum Energy LLC, alongside Complete Building Services (CBS), to identify and implement impactful energy improvements.

### The Challenge:

- Rising energy costs
- Tenant comfort importance
- Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS compliance deadline)

### About the Client:

Founded in 1884, Donohoe is the oldest family-owned full-service commercial real estate firm in D.C., managing millions of square feet in the Mid-Atlantic region.

## Project Approach

### Phase 1: Infrastructure Optimization

- New Building Automation System
- Installed Variable Frequency Drives on Main CW Loop Pumps
- Pump Controls & Boiler Optimization
- Demand Control Ventilation

### Phase 2: Smart Controls & Lighting

- 372 Smart Thermostats with CO<sub>2</sub>/Humidity Sensors
- Upgraded LED Lighting in Common Areas

### KEY RESULTS



**1.25M**  
kWh Saved  
Annually



**\$121,000**  
Annual Cost  
Savings



**213%**  
Total ROI with  
Incentives



**16%**  
Lower than  
BEPS Target

## Results & Funding

At the heart of this project was Spectrum Energy's proprietary LEAP™ Program (Leadership + Efficiency + Analysis = Profit). This framework guided all phases, from identifying the highest-impact efficiency upgrades to securing funding and verifying results.

**\$121,000 in Verified Annual Savings:** Lower monthly utility bills started immediately after implementation, improving cash flow and significantly reducing operating expenses.

**22% Direct ROI:** Even without incentives, the numbers made sense.

**1.25M kWh Saved / Year:** These substantial savings translated to lower Energy Use Intensity (EUI) and helped meet future energy performance regulations.

**213% Total ROI with Incentives:** Smart funding strategy turned this project into a financial win.

“The investment in Building Automation System and Thermostat upgrades was an obvious choice from the start given that most project expenses were covered by incentives, grants and tax credits. The reduction in energy expenses exceeded projections so that the ROI was almost instant and the resulting improvement in building operations and the enhanced tenant experience, left no doubt this was the right decision.”

— Scott Csernecky, AVP,  
Donohoe Commercial Real Estate

## Funding Sources Secured

Spectrum Energy assisted with the application process and successfully secured funding from:

- PEPCO UTILITY INCENTIVES (EMPOWER PROGRAM)
- MARYLAND ENERGY ADMIN CI&A GRANT
- FEDERAL TAX INCENTIVES
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY SUPPORT



**TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$550K**

Funding Sources Breakdown

**\$1.05 M**  
Total Incentives

**191%**  
of Project Cost

## Want Similar Results?

Spectrum Energy can help you lower costs, improve comfort, and meet local regulations—without draining your capital budget. Start your next project with Spectrum.

