



PRO BONO VERIFICATION

Hope Christian Reformed Church, Oak Forest IL



The simple choice for energy efficiency.

September 2016

Pro Bono ENERGY STAR Verification

Hope Christian Reformed Church in Oak Forest, IL has become the first congregation in the Christian Reformed Church to earn ENERGY STAR certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. “We see caring for creation as a moral, faith-based issue and have been doing this in a tangible way by saving energy costs in our church,” said Corenna Roozeboom, chair of the creation care committee.

After passage of the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015, the church decided to demonstrate its stewardship of creation by earning EPA’s ENERGY STAR. Worship facilities that earn the ENERGY STAR use 35% less energy and emit 35% less greenhouse gas emissions, on average, than typical facilities.

The church improved its energy savings by swapping out their old incandescent lights for LED bulbs, purchasing and installing a more efficient heating system, installing motion-sensitive lighting, insulating the roof, and making necessary adjustments to cut down on water use.

With an ENERGY STAR score of 78, the church began searching for a licensed professional to verify the data for certification. Cost estimates were considered too high and stalled verification efforts until the church learned of EPA’s new pro bono initiative with Public Architecture, an organization that helps non-profit and public organizations find professional engineers and architects willing to provide professional services on short term projects, free of charge.

Public Architecture’s 1+ matching tool (www.theoneplus.org) connected the church to Goby, a Chicago based ENERGY STAR Partner that provides verification and other energy services to its clients. Goby reviewed the church’s energy and operational data and discovered inexact numbers

on gross square footage and refrigerator/freezer units. When corrected, the ENERGY STAR score increased to an 83.

The Statement of Energy Performance was prepared and stamped by the professional engineer at Goby, sent to the EPA for approval, and approved 4-weeks after the initial connection through Public Architecture.

Pro Bono Services Get a Boost

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has partnered with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and Public Architecture to match ENERGY STAR-eligible buildings owned or operated by public sector and non-profit organizations with architects and engineers willing to verify applications on a cost-free, “pro bono” basis.

Many architects and engineers offer free verification services to schools, hospitals, houses of worship, and other facilities. These professionals offer pro bono services because they believe that it encourages energy efficiency in U.S. buildings and offers triple bottom line advantages for everyone involved:

- **Economic:** Reduced utility bills for building owners and marketable experience for architects and engineers.
- **Environmental:** A healthier environment through reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Social:** Recognition to those committed to energy efficiency and improved indoor environmental quality for occupants, and new connections between building owners, architects, and engineers.



To participate in EPA’s pro bono ENERGY STAR verification program, visit www.energystar.gov/probono.

ENERGY STAR® is the simple choice for energy efficiency. For more than 20 years, EPA’s ENERGY STAR program has been America’s resource for saving energy and protecting the environment. Join the millions making a difference at energystar.gov.