



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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## Press Release

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### **Energy Department Recognizes University of Utah in Better Buildings Challenge**

*Health Professions Education Building Showcases Energy Efficiency Improvements*

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – As part of President Obama’s [Better Buildings Challenge](#), the Energy Department recognized the University of Utah today for its leadership in energy efficiency and for reducing energy use by 40 percent in a historic campus building, saving the university \$57,000 a year.

Through the Better Buildings Challenge, the university upgraded the 42-year-old Dumke Health Professions Education Building and is on track to meet an energy reduction goal of 20 percent by 2020 across 13 million square feet of building space.

“The University of Utah, along with other Better Buildings partners is saving millions of dollars by cutting energy waste and reducing carbon emissions,” said Dave Danielson, Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. “The university’s efforts showcase strategies that can be replicated at similar buildings, institutions and facilities across America.”

The University of Utah identified the building as a Better Buildings showcase project because of its unreliable heating and cooling systems. The building underwent comprehensive heating and air conditioning system improvements to update the cooling system including replacing antiquated and faulty controls, two boilers and related equipment. As a multi-use building, it houses classroom, office, laboratory and clinic space for the Departments of Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Neurobiology and Anatomy. Nearly half of the building is occupied by energy-intensive labs and walk-in refrigerators for the university’s human anatomy and body donor programs.

"We are pleased to complete the first Better Buildings Challenge showcase upgrade in the state and to save money and reduce our environmental impact," said Amy Wildermuth, interim chief sustainability officer at the University of Utah. "While our new buildings are all constructed to higher efficiency standards, it is important to improve our existing buildings that still have a long life ahead of them."

Additionally, the university will fund its next set of efficiency projects through its Energy Management Fund. The fund uses the savings from energy efficiency projects to continually reinvest in future projects. The university also implemented a streamlined financing process for administrative and energy management staff to propose, select and implement efficiency projects, resulting in greater energy savings returned to the fund for future work.

A cornerstone of the President's Climate Action Plan, the Better Buildings Challenge supports the goal of doubling American energy productivity by 2030, while motivating corporate and public sector leaders across the country to save energy through commitments and investments. To date, more than 200 organizations are partnering with the Energy Department to achieve 20 percent portfolio-wide energy savings and share successful strategies that maximize efficiency over the next decade. Across the country, Better Buildings Challenge partners are advancing energy efficiency at more than 9,000 facilities with more than 2,100 buildings improving efficiency by at least 20 percent and another 4,500 by at least 10 percent, compared to their baseline years.

Find more information about the Better Buildings Challenge at [www.energy.gov/betterbuildingschallenge](http://www.energy.gov/betterbuildingschallenge).