

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ CASE STUDIES

# ENERGY STARS

## Energy management practices in line with high-level guest services

Four Washington, D.C., hotels—the Willard InterContinental Washington, the Fairmont Washington, D.C., the Hotel George, and the Best Western Capitol Skyline—have joined *Lodging*, the EPA's Energy Star program, and the AH&LA in a dialogue about superior energy management practices. Recently, members of Energy Star, AH&LA, and *Lodging* toured two of the properties to witness firsthand the energy-saving practices of these environmental champions. Below are the results for the two properties.

### MAKING THE OLD NEW AT THE WILLARD

The 332-room Willard InterContinental is located in the heart of downtown Washington, just steps from the White House. Behind the historic exterior resides a calculated energy-management plan that has been developed with the explicit support of General Manager Hervé Houdré. This plan is a key part of the property's integrated approach to improved operational efficiency, cost savings and a smaller environmental footprint.

Across all areas of operations, the Willard InterContinental's

staff is trained to participate in the property's energy efficiency programs: Housekeeping staff return thermostats to pre-defined set points after completing work in guestrooms; in the laundry room, every machine is filled to capacity before operation; and during low-occupancy periods, front desk staff removes entire floors from service, allowing these areas to remain minimally lit and air conditioned. Even guests are invited to take an active and meaningful role in energy-saving activities: They can take part in a towel and linen re-use program, and they are also informed that these savings will be donated to an environmental charity.

Willard guestrooms and public spaces are lit almost entirely with compact florescent light

bulbs (CFLs), a technology that reduces the hotel's total annual energy consumption by almost 10 percent. This measure alone results in an estimated savings of \$100,000 per year and avoids annual emissions of more than 500 tons of greenhouse gas—equivalent to taking 100 cars off the road. In addition, high-efficiency, low-emission boilers help heat the building during Washington's unpredictable winters, and timers and occupancy sensors on public area air-handling units help avoid unnecessary space conditioning.

This year the Willard plans to link all guestroom digital thermostats into a centralized energy management system—allowing the front desk to ensure that vacant individual rooms are not conditioned or lit more than needed. In addition,

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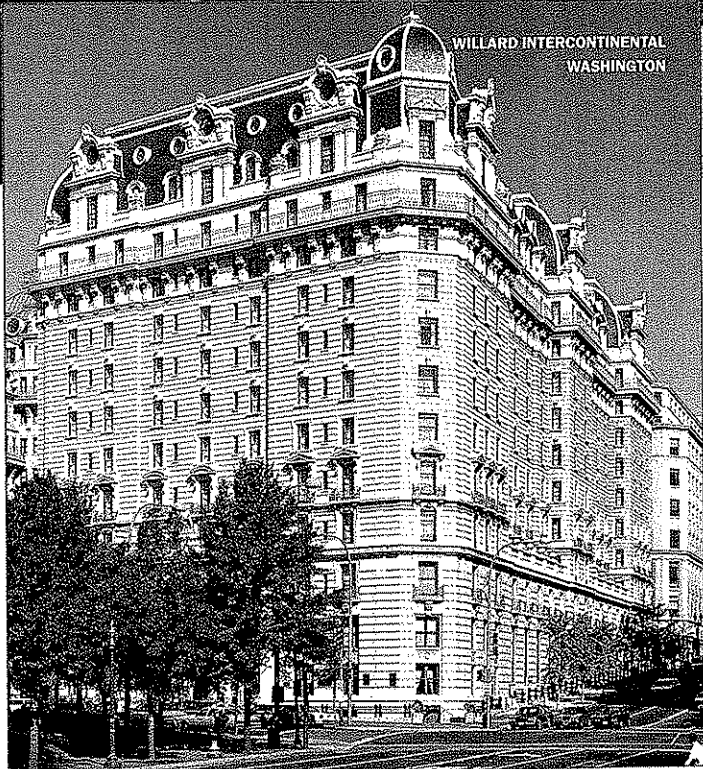
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THE FAIRMONT, WASHINGTON D.C.

the director of facilities is experimenting with new configurations of acoustic, infrared and ultrasonic motion/occupancy sensors, which may allow corridor lighting to be dimmed until a guest enters an area. While still addressing all safety concerns and occupancy codes, this may allow the hotel to reap further energy savings from the CFLs that are already installed.

#### SETTING THE GREEN STANDARD AT THE FAIRMONT

The Fairmont Washington, D.C., known for its chic West

End location and lavish Sunday brunches, has adopted a similarly aggressive approach to energy efficiency—reminding us that sound energy management has indeed become a valued and admired amenity among the guests of high-end hotels.

Fairmont's approach emphasizes the importance of internal communications and coordination. The hotel's Green Team meets weekly to discuss environmental issues, carry out corporate strategy, and share best practices. In cooperation with Fairmont's corporate office, the

Fairmont Washington, D.C., has undertaken a variety of maintenance and operational efforts to reduce energy consumption. Further underscoring Fairmont's corporate green standards, all new employees receive environmental education during orientation. In-room brochures also communicate Fairmont's green vision to guests.

Currently at the Fairmont Washington, D.C., all guest corridors and two guestroom floors are lit by CFLs. In the coming year, the hotel will look into replacing all remaining guestroom and back-of-house incandescent lighting with CFLs—a smart move, considering that Energy Star rates CFLs as using at least two-thirds less electricity and lasting up to 10 times longer than standard incandescents. The few remaining T-12

fluorescent fixtures in the back of the house will be replaced with more efficient T-8s—which can result in energy savings ranging between 20 and 40 percent per fixture, according to Energy Star. Finally, given the abundance of natural light entering the hotel atrium, dimmers have been installed and timers have been programmed to adjust the amount of overhead light depending on the time of day.

In addition to the lighting projects under consideration for 2007, the Fairmont Washington, D.C., is exploring several steps to upgrade the 22-year-old property's infrastructure. When planned and executed thoughtfully, these measures will optimize other energy-efficiency efforts. Measures that can be paired for

greater results include retrofitting the chiller and boiler tubes and installing temperature-dependent variable speed drives on water pumps. Future plans for a roof replacement can be coupled with other technologies that tighten the building envelope. Completed as part of a strategy, these measures can have a significant impact on outdoor air and moisture infiltration and reduce the building's heating and cooling load while providing better occupant comfort. The Fairmont also plans to install additional programmable lighting dimmers in meeting spaces and hallways in addition to other upgrades to its energy management system.

#### NEXT IN THE SERIES

Over the next year, Energy Star will work with these two

properties, along with the Hotel George and the Best Western Capitol Skyline, to track energy savings and to relay best practices for energy management using the Energy Star Portfolio Manager tool and other resources such as the Energy Star Guidelines for Strategic Energy Management, the Energy Management Assessment Matrix, and the new Teaming Up to Save Energy guide.

For more information on these resources, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov). For more information regarding this article series and to learn more about an exciting new energy management training series sponsored by AH&LA and Energy Star, see the AH&LA's Good Earthkeeping program Web site at [www.ahla.com/good\\_earth\\_overview.asp](http://www.ahla.com/good_earth_overview.asp). ■

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