WKU Energy Savings

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Rain-water harvesting, reduced summer hours and upgrading thousands of lightbulbs. These are just some of the many ways WKU continues to reduce it’s carbon footprint.

In this week’s View from the Hill, Amy Bingham looks at how the latest energy saving measures are paying off on campus.

When it comes to conserving energy, Western Kentucky University has all sorts of efforts in place, many you probably don’t know about.

You’ve probably never even noticed this tan-colored tank near the entrance of Facilities Management, or this one, beside Health Services.

But these cisterns actually harvest rainwater.

 “The one by Facilities Management is collecting rain water from the gutter of PS1 and little bit of filtration and those are used to irrigate local gardens.”

And when was the last time you were on the roof of the Preston Center? Well this is what you would find – a solar collector to preheat the swimming pool.

 “That glycol in black tubing heats up really hot with the sun and travels down thru a closed loop system warms up the pool water.”

WKU has also retrofitted or replaced more than seventy thousand lights in 35 buildings including both parking structures.

 “They have fewer fixtures, each uses less energy but the light is better.”

Trimming 500 kilowatts of electricity usage at WKU recently resulted in a check for more than one hundred thousand dollars from TVA.

 “By us reducing our summer peak, we were able to save money and thus we provide incentives to institutions such as WKU to do that.”

WKU employees are helping out too, by working a reduced summer schedule of 7:30 to from mid-May through mid-August.

 “That’s terrific for employees but it also allows us to use less energy in the peak high demand hours in the afternoon hours when energy is at it most expensive cost.”

In all, WKU invested more than 9.6 million dollars in energy saving measures, with a guaranteed energy savings of more than one million dollars each year.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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