



Photo: Hi-Lake Shopping Center, April 2021

Rebuilding Green with Recovery Rebates

HD Laundry opened in December 2019 in the Hi-Lake Shopping Center on East Lake Street in Minneapolis, a location that has been a laundromat for 30 years. Just six months later, HD Laundry became one of the many businesses damaged in the uprising following George Floyd’s murder on May 25, 2020. The owner of the building, Wellington Management, used Recovery Rebates from Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy to replace the building, HVAC equipment, lighting, and solar array. Read on to learn more about their rebuilding process and the special rebates.

In November of 2018, Wellington Management added an 80-kW solar array to the Hiawatha-Lake Shopping Center building using the City of Minneapolis Green Cost Share program (on.mncerts.org/greencostshare). The solar powered the exterior lights and parking lot lighting. The solar panels, along with much of the building, were destroyed in a fire on May 28 and 29 of 2020.

For the rebuild, Wellington Management decided to go big on energy efficiency. Company COO Dave Bergstrom shared, “We built a much more efficient building, significantly reducing air leakage and providing the added benefit of quicker construction by using cement tip-up panels with an R-20 rating.” The panels have two layers of cement and two layers of foam. In addition, they increased the efficiency of the equipment, replacing 10-year-old rooftop HVAC units with higher efficiency models and switching out existing fluorescent lighting to LEDs in all the tenant areas. Now the whole building has LEDs, including the parking lot and security lights. “We always look for energy efficiency where we can find it,” Bergstrom continued. They are also replacing the 18-month-old solar array that was damaged when the building burned.

Wellington Management was able to take advantage of special Recovery Rebates from Xcel Energy (xcelenergy.com/recoveryrebates), who is doubling normal rebates for lighting, HVAC, and cooking equipment, and CenterPoint Energy (centerpointenergy.com/rebuild), who is tripling normal rebates for standard measures such as boilers, furnaces, water heating, and foodservice equipment.



Hi-Lake Shopping Center during fire

Wellington also provided business owner contact information to Energy Smart (on.mncerts.org/energysmart) to share the opportunities with the tenants in the building that qualified for the increased Recovery Rebates for equipment they owned that needed to be replaced. One of those tenants is Dawit Assefa, owner of HD Laundry. Dawit came to the United States from Ethiopia 20 years ago, and HD Laundry is his second laundromat. Dawit was able to take advantage of the Recovery Rebates, because in addition to the standard rebates, utilities are also offering custom rebates to damaged or destroyed businesses.

“I try to be as energy efficient as I can, something everyone should do,” shared Dawit Assefa. “I have applied energy efficiency for my home in the form of efficient lighting and equipment, so was open to it in my business.” His business will reopen in July 2021 following the rebuild.



Outside HD Laundry during fire



Inside HD Laundry after fire



Outside HD Laundry during rebuild



New equipment at HD Laundry

Newer washing machine technology, using a system that injects ozone into the machine as the clothes are washing, eliminates the need for hot water. It also reduces bacteria, making the laundry cleaner and fresher than a standard washing machine. "I'm hoping to get more customers because they will see how this new technology makes their clothes cleaner," said Dawit. He looks forward to educating his diverse customers about the new technology. The new machines—the largest in the city at twelve loads each—also have a very high spin rate for faster drying.

Dawit qualified for a custom rebate from CenterPoint Energy for the ozone system, making it nearly free, and will save money for his business on natural gas costs because they do not require hot water to wash the clothes. Energy Smart estimates that the new ozone technology will save Dawit \$36,000 each year on energy expenses!

Our hope is that other businesses that suffered damage and loss will take advantage of the Recovery Rebates before they expire on December 31, 2021.

For an energy assessment and assistance with rebates for your building, contact Kevin Zickert with Energy Smart in collaboration with Lake Street Council at energy@lakestreetcouncil.org or 651-292-4652. **For questions about energy efficiency or solar energy** for your building and how CERTs can support you, contact Diana McKeown, Metro CERT Director at the Great Plains Institute, at dmckeown@gpisd.net.



- 1 Deadline to enroll** in the special Recovery Rebate programs for both Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy is December 31, 2021.
- 2 Eligibility is limited** to CenterPoint and Xcel customers making repairs and purchases as a result of acts of property damage in the Twin Cities area in 2020.
- 3 Qualifying equipment** must be purchased after program application is submitted in order to be eligible.
- 4 Final invoices** must be submitted before the end of 2021 for rebate eligibility.

Learn more: centerpointenergy.com/rebuild & xcelenergy.com/recoveryrebates