



LED LIGHTS SERVE UP SAVINGS FOR PEORIA RESTAURANT

As a Catering Director, Mary Beth Milburn built a career around providing superior dining experiences. That wealth of experience took on new meaning when she and her husband Cassel, along with son Dan Gilfillan, opened the doors of MD's Sports Bar & Grill in spring 2017.

"It's my passion. I love what we do," says Milburn. "I never owned a company until now, and we wanted to do it right."

That meant eight intense weeks cleaning up the Peoria restaurant they purchased and making it their own. The fluorescent lighting, several decades old, quickly moved to the top of their to-do list.

"Lighting was something that needed our attention," she recalls. "We had a lot of old fluorescent bulbs."

Help, however, was right around the corner. During renovations, the Milburns learned about Ameren Illinois rebates for lighting upgrades.

"We help with a variety of energy efficiency measures that can give small businesses a boost to their bottom line," says Ken Woolcutt, Energy Efficiency Manager at Ameren Illinois. "We connect customers to cash incentives and qualified contractors to help them make changes that will reduce their energy bills — and their impact on the environment."

"Now we have LEDs everywhere. It's made such a difference," says Milburn, who was initially concerned about the impact on their monthly power bill. Instead, we're seeing savings of about \$400 a month. I was shocked — in a good way!"

Brighten Your Business & Boost Your Bottom Line

Lighting accounts for 20-50% of the average organization's electricity consumption. On the bright side, that means your business or nonprofit can enjoy significant savings — year after year — by making simple lighting improvements. Submit your qualified lighting project and gain:

- Cash incentives
- Lower electricity bills
- Better lighting
- Reduced project costs
- Longer lamp life
- Faster payback period
- Lower maintenance costs
- Reduced impact on the environment



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The Lowdown on LEDs

ENERGY STAR® qualified T8 LED lighting uses roughly 40 percent less energy than T12 fluorescent lighting, which cuts operating costs. And because T8s last more than three times as long as T12s, you'll save on maintenance costs, too — all while gaining a better quality of light.

"LEDs have set a new standard for efficiency, and there are bulbs to meet every need."

— Ken Woolcutt,
Energy Efficiency, Manager
Ameren Illinois



Beyond energy savings, LED bulbs boast a long life that translates to lower maintenance costs.

"These bulbs are expected to last much longer than traditional lighting, and we're pocketing a lot of the difference," notes Milburn. "Our lights are on all day long — from 10:30 a.m. until midnight or later every single day, but we haven't changed a single bulb in a year and a half."

One thing that has changed is the ambiance of this popular Peoria eatery. The LED lighting offers better illumination that enhances everything from cooking and cleaning to safety and marketing.

For example, dimmable LED bulbs allow for both a bright dining area and a more cozy feel in the bar area; while LED holiday strand lighting keeps things festive year-round.

"You may think you can't afford to do it, but you can't afford not to!"

— MaryBeth Milburn,
MD's Sports Bar & Grill

"It's a cleaner light. It doesn't hurt your eyes, and nothing looks yellow under the LEDs. It helps when we're fixing food and cleaning the place," says Milburn. "Plus, we take pictures of our food all the time for social media. Under the LED lights, our menu items look so good that people think a professional photographer has done it."

"Lighting is a great place for any facility to start saving, and technology is always advancing," says Woolcutt. "LEDs have set a new standard for efficiency, and there are bulbs to meet every need."

"We're off to a great start. People love the new lighting," says Milburn. "From beginning to end, the experience of working with Ameren Illinois to save energy has just been amazing. You may think you can't afford to do it, but you can't afford not to!"

Energy Efficiency. It's Good Business.

Since 2008, the award-winning Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program has provided millions in incentives to help business, nonprofit and public organizations reduce their annual energy costs. Incentives are available for a variety of energy-saving projects, including lighting, heating and cooling, refrigeration, motors, steam system improvements, and compressed air.

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