



NEW LIGHTING FURNISHES SAVINGS FOR SHERMAN'S



Four decades later, seeds planted by Jack and Sharon Sherman continue to grow.

Today, the modest microwave oven business they began in 1976 has 160 employees in three Illinois locations — and far more than microwaves in the showroom. These days, customers turn to Sherman's for fashionable furniture, comfortable bedding, and state-of-the-art appliances and electronics.

In 2015, Sherman's purchased a 127,000-square foot building in Peoria Heights to serve as a distribution center and to keep pace with steady growth. To ready the building, an improvement plan was developed that put lighting upgrades in the spotlight.

"The building had been vacant for 10 years. The hundreds of metal halide fixtures were inefficient and dim," says General Manager Paul Sherman, son of Jack and Sharon. "I was aware there were incentives out there, and our lighting contractor helped identify options."

The Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program quickly landed at the top of that list.

The program features almost two dozen measures — from LED and other lighting upgrades, to new construction, exterior fixtures, exit signs, and occupancy sensors. Participants receive cash incentives for every watt reduced by switching from an existing fixture to a new lighting solution.

"Ameren Illinois offers incentives to all sizes of businesses to offset the cost to upgrade lighting," says Energy Advisor Chad Whitehead. "There are typically five barriers to energy efficiency: time, money, staff, knowledge, and comfort. Our program is designed to eliminate all of those barriers."

Sherman's easily bypassed those barriers with more than \$20,000 in incentives from Ameren Illinois. Those funds made it far more affordable to replace 230 outdated metal halide light fixtures using a mix of LEDs and T5s.

"The building has two levels — the primary level is used 18 hours a day, so we chose LED to accommodate more usage. We chose T5 lighting for the upper level, where usage is more sporadic," says Sherman. "Without the incentives, we probably would have only done one level."

About 80 employees work at the facility, which has become the company's administrative headquarters, as well as a warehouse and distribution center. The new lights made for a far warmer welcome when staff moved in February 2016.

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— Chad Whitehead,
Energy Advisor

Spotlight on Safety

The Peoria Heights building purchased by Sherman's in 2015 was once used as a distribution center for another local furniture company. That business suffered a multi-million dollar loss of inventory when a metal halide lamp burst and set fire to a sofa.

Fortunately, the new lighting installed by Sherman's is far safer. Unlike metal halides, LED lights do not feature a gas operating under extreme pressures at very high temperatures.

Because they produce less heat, LED bulbs significantly reduce the risk of accidental burns or fires. They are also shatter-resistant, making them safer than old glass bulbs.

The new lighting even caught the eye of inspectors when Paul Sherman proactively invited the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) to inspect the company's new facility.

"We didn't mention the new lighting to them, but they called out the lighting as 'exceptional' and noted that it really adds to the safety of what we are doing."

Brighten Your Business. Boost Your Bottom Line.

Flip the Switch on Energy Waste

Lighting accounts for 20 to 50% of the average business' electricity consumption. On the bright side, that means you can enjoy significant savings — year after year — simply by making simple lighting improvements.

Ameren Illinois offers cash incentives for a variety of lighting projects, including:

- Replacing T12s with high-performance T8 or T5 lamps
- LED exit signs
- Interior LED lighting
- LED case lighting
- High-bay lighting replacements
- Exterior lighting for canopies and garages
- T8-to-T5 relamp and reballast
- Permanent lamp/fixture removal

The Lowdown on LEDs

ENERGY STAR®-qualified LED lighting uses at least 75% less energy than incandescent lighting, which cuts operating costs. And because it lasts 35 to 50 times longer than incandescent lighting — and up to five times longer than fluorescent lighting — you'll save on maintenance costs, too.



READY TO BEGIN?

AmerenIllinoisSavings.com
1.866.800.0747

"The Ameren Illinois rebate process is about as smooth as I've ever seen. I was expecting to jump through a lot more hoops to participate, but the experience was refreshingly painless."

— **Paul Sherman**, General Manager, Sherman's

"A lot of people underappreciate the importance of lighting. When you have bright, high-Kelvin light, it's simply a happier place to be," says Sherman. "The closer you can get to sunlight, the more positive the effect."

That high-efficiency lighting also has a positive effect on the company's bottom line — and the environment.

The new lighting reduced Sherman's annual electricity consumption by more than 286,000 kWh, saving roughly \$17,000 every year in lighting costs. Beyond the direct savings, long-lasting lighting also reduces maintenance costs.

"Sherman's ensured they had the lowest lighting operating costs possible from Day 1. And that adds value to that property immediately," says Whitehead.

Cost savings were only one factor driving the lighting upgrade. Quality of light was critical, as well.

"The work we do in this building involves inspecting and preparing our products for delivery. If we miss a defect and the truck is already 60 miles away, it's a problem," says Sherman. "We needed a very bright, color-correct lighting."

Regardless of your lighting need, in today's ever-evolving marketplace, you can easily find a product that meets that need at less cost.

"You can always find comparable functionality with reduced wattage — and often, better quality of light," says Whitehead. "Sometimes, additional savings can be had because customers can get more light out of fewer fixtures."

Getting more for less matters in an increasingly competitive world.

"The Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program is an easy way to reduce operating costs, increase profits, and stay competitive," says Whitehead. "What else will return your investment in four years or less?"

As Paul Sherman has learned, a growing business and shrinking energy costs can go hand-in-hand — and the process can be surprisingly simple.

"The Ameren Illinois incentive process is about as smooth as I've ever seen. I was expecting to jump through a lot more hoops to participate, but the experience was refreshingly painless," he says.

"I would absolutely recommend the Ameren Illinois program to other business owners. There is nothing negative about the program — it's totally positive."

Brighten Your Business. Boost Your Bottom Line.

Submit your qualified lighting project and gain:

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

