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Case study: ENERGY STAR® Multifamily High-Rise Pilot Program: Molinaro Group

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Project overview

About the program



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The ENERGY STAR Multifamily High-Rise Pilot Program is a certification initiative offered in Ontario that recognizes new multifamily buildings designed to be **at least 15% more energy-efficient than those constructed to the provincial energy code** and meet other program requirements.

The program aims to reduce energy costs for consumers, fight climate change, and foster the development of healthy communities.

About the proponents

Molinaro Group

Since 1963, Molinaro Group, based in Burlington, Ontario, has developed over ten thousand residential units and more than one million square feet of commercial real estate space. They proactively pursue energy efficiency accreditation for their condominium developments and advocate for increased energy efficiency across the development industry.

Illumina Condos

Illumina Condos, located at 500 Brock Ave, Burlington, Ontario, is a 22-storey condo building, featuring 160 units, with ground floor commercial space.

Modelled annual savings

52%

(\$215,379)

Electricity Savings

42% / 29%

Peak Summer/Winter Electricity Demand Reduction

30%

(\$22,649)

Natural Gas Savings

35%

Avoided GHG Emissions

29%

Domestic Hot Water Savings

* Reported by the building operator, versus a building built to the Ontario building code.

Key facts

- ENERGY STAR certified in 2024
- Guidance provided by SRS Consulting Engineers Inc.
- Building design by Architects at Graziani + Corazza
- Building energy modelling completed by ENERQUALITY

Energy efficient design elements



- **Multiple modulating condensing boiler**, with a thermal efficiency of up to 99%, to reduce natural gas use
- **ENERGY STAR appliances** in each unit to reduce electricity use
- **Low-flow water fixtures** to reduce both water use and energy used to produce hot water
- **Variable speed or variable frequency drives (VSD/VFD)** on all HVAC fans and circulation pumps to reduce electricity use

- The use of **LED lighting** in each suite and LEDs with occupancy sensors in common areas
- In-suite **energy recovery ventilators (ERV)** that reduce indoor pollutants, control humidity, and provide a healthier indoor environment
- **Heat Recovery Ventilators (HRV)** in the building Lobby, Amenity Room, and Party Room and in the ground floor Commercial Retail Space
- **Low air leakage rates** of over 60% less than code, which reduces drafts and exterior noise, contributing to increased occupant comfort
- **Energy efficient windows** with thermal transmittance, or U-value, that is 10% better than code
- **Higher insulation**, including on-grade floor insulation that is 50% better than code and wall, roof, and floor insulation that is 15% to 20% better than code

Other benefits

- Molinaro Group found the ENERGY STAR program easy to implement.
- The ENERGY STAR brand is useful as part of a marketing strategy due to its global recognition.
- Having ENERGY STAR branding is great for sale and for resale value, as it is seen as an indicator of quality.

Lessons learned

- Molinaro Group have built energy efficient buildings before, including receiving LEED accreditation, so they were already on the learning curve and were able to easily adapt to the requirements of the ENERGY STAR program.
- Working with an ENERGY STAR consultant was helpful because that person was able to bring the other consultants on board and guide everyone through the checklists of requirements and facilitate the overall process.
- It is better when builders implement energy efficiency voluntarily, as they can do it in a way that makes sense for each development.

Receiving ENERGY STAR certification for Illumina is a testament to our ongoing commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency. We understand the importance of reducing our carbon footprint and creating environmentally friendly living spaces. This certification reinforces our belief that the steps we've taken toward a greener future are steps in the right direction. Vince Molinaro

President, Molinaro Group



Related links

- [Energy efficiency programs for buildings](#)

Contact us

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