3M™ Window Film Saves Money, Increases Sustainability at Legendary Century Plaza Towers in Los Angeles

Payback period is less than eight months for the 11,000 window installation

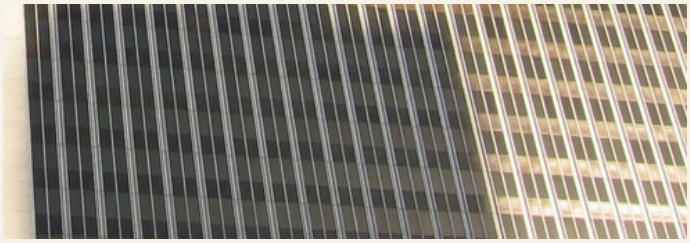
CASE HISTORY

The ownership and management of the iconic Century Plaza Towers (Century City, Calif.) made a big push to increase the energy efficiency and sustainability of their 36-year-old landmark buildings. A collaborative effort between a 3M sales representative and a local 3M window film dealer resulted in the installation of 3M™ Sun Control Window Film Neutral 35 on more than 11,000 windows. The project had a payback period of less than eight months and greatly reduced energy costs while providing building management with a utility rebate of more than $100,000.

BACKGROUND

The land around the Century Plaza Towers in Los Angeles is truly legendary ground. From the late 1920s until nearly 1960, the site was home to one of the premier studios of Hollywood's Golden Age: 20th Century Fox Pictures. Stars like Cary Grant, Marilyn Monroe, John Wayne and others starred in movies filmed on the studio back lot.

Part of that land was later sold, and construction of the landmark Century Plaza Towers, comprising of two 44-story towers and 2.3 million square feet of class "A" office space, was completed in 1974. Both towers used aluminum for the facade, and they have been pictured in countless movies and television shows over the years.



CHALLENGE

The unique three-sided configuration of each tower—and the steady supply of California sunshine—combined to make consistent heating and cooling a challenge. When property management company CB Richard Ellis looked at options for solving the temperature imbalance and making the towers more energy efficient, one of the ideas they considered was window film.

"We've taken a number of steps to enhance sustainability at Century Plaza Towers," said Renee Watkinson, Vice President and Director of CB Richard Ellis. "We've installed an irrigation management system and waterless urinals to reduce water use, along with lighting retrofits to reduce energy use. We saw window film as another way to improve our sustainability."

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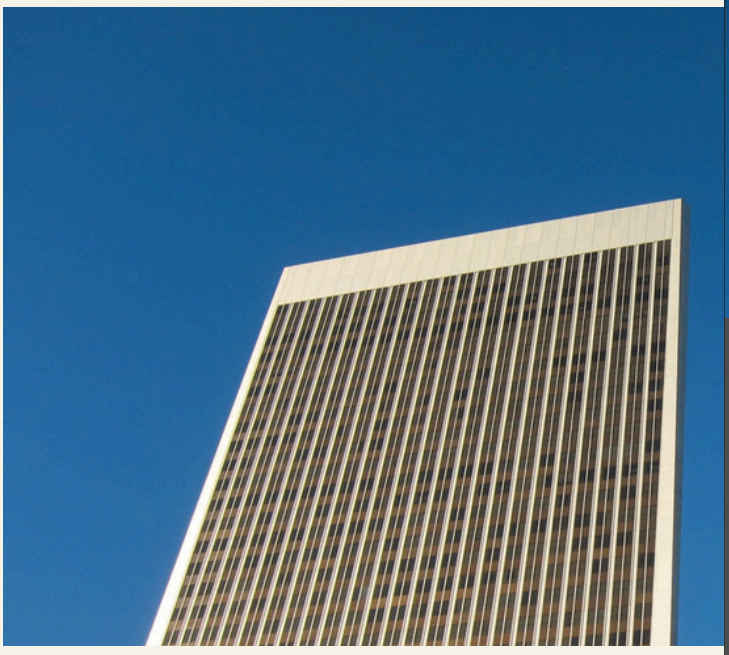
SOLUTION

The project's management considered several different window film manufacturers. But that changed when the building's Chief Engineer, Chris Daniel, said building management was only interested in working with 3M products. Management contacted a 3M representative, and Brad Campbell, a local 3M window film dealer, was brought in on the project.

Keeping in mind the historical nature of Century Plaza Towers, the group decided on 3M™ Sun Control Window Film Neutral 35 for its high heat rejection qualities and neutral light appearance, so that it wouldn't drastically change the look of the buildings.

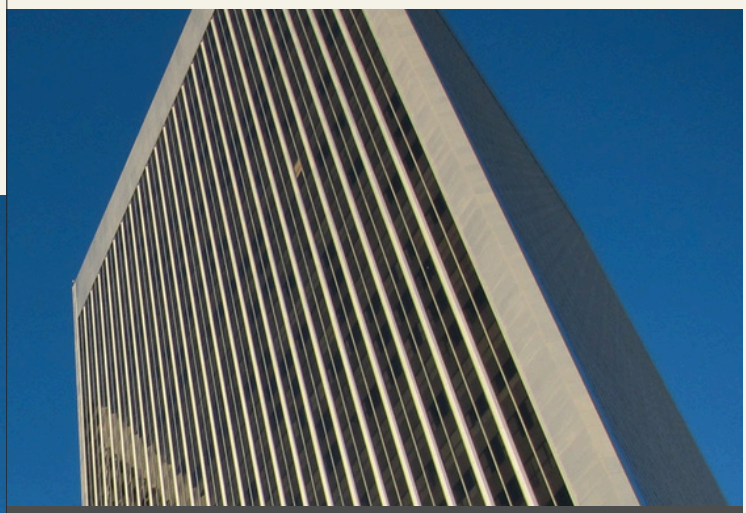


"These are highly-visible towers," said Campbell, "And it was important to strike a balance between aesthetics and energy savings."

According to Ms. Watkinson, crews brought both efficiency and professionalism to Century Plaza Towers, working both nights and weekends to install the 3M film on the towers' 11,000 windows between floors 2 and 44. The project was completed in just four months, and the benefits were immediate. In addition to more consistent temperatures throughout the building, utility bills began to drop. Just as importantly, much of the project's cost was offset by a rebate of $116,000 from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

THE 3M DIFFERENCE

"3M is a very credible and professional company, and CB Richard Ellis has had a national relationship with them for some time," Watkinson said. "The payback on this project was only seven-and-a-half months, and both 3M and Campbell Window Film did a great job. It was one of the easiest capital projects we've ever done."



PROJECT SUMMARY

3M Dealer: Brad Campbell, owner, Campbell Window Film

Installation Date: Completed in April 2009

Windows Covered: Approximately 11,000

Installation Time: Four months, with two crews working nights and weekends

Type of Film: 3M Sun Control Window Film Neutral 35

Payback Period: Less than eight months

KWH Savings: With the addition of window film, building management saves 155,000 KWH per month

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