



Energy Center  
Pittsburgh

# Energy News

for the **Northside**

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## Allegheny General Hospital: Pillar of the Northside

Courtesy West Penn Allegheny Health System



**Allegheny General Hospital's 17-story main building opened in the late 1920s. Many decades later, the hospital added the LifeFlight aeromedical service, which was the first to fly in the northeastern United States.**

Allegheny General Hospital has served the Northside community of Pittsburgh for a long time. To put it in perspective, the hospital was founded in 1885—the same year the Statue of Liberty arrived in New York City! To most of us it seems that Lady Liberty has always graced the Big Apple. To those of us in Pittsburgh, it seems there has always been an Allegheny General Hospital (AGH).

**A quaternary hospital** provides advanced, highly specialized levels of medicine including experimental medicine, service-oriented surgeries and other less common approaches to treatment and diagnostics.

AGH, an NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh steam and chilled-water customer, offers a wide array of medical and surgical services and has earned an international reputation for excellence and innovation in the care of patients, medical education and research. It is the flagship quaternary facility of the West Penn Allegheny Health System, a physician-led organization committed to improving the health of people in western Pennsylvania.

Recognized as one of the country's 100 Top Hospitals by Thomson Healthcare, AGH annually admits more than 29,000 patients and logs more than 68,000 emergency visits and 21,000 surgical procedures. Nearly 800 physicians and approximately 5,000

employees work at the hospital's 661-bed Northside medical center.

Twenty years ago, Allegheny General Hospital became a part of the Northside Partnership Agreement, a groundbreaking agreement among 15 Northside businesses and organizations to work together to encourage neighborhood reinvestment, education and employment, home ownership, and health and wellness. This relationship stands as the longest-running partnership between a community and a major medical institution in the Pittsburgh region.

"AGH recently participated in the partnership's 20th anniversary celebration," says AGH spokesman Dan Laurent. "Representatives from each Northside neighborhood and many of our community partners were there to mark our progress and reinforce our commitment to communication, consultation and cooperation between AGH and the Northside. We look forward to continuing our work together to build a vibrant community in which to live, work and invest."

The hospital also is a good neighbor by being a responsible energy consumer. AGH uses steam and chilled water from NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh for heating and cooling the hospital's patient, clinical, public and office spaces. Additionally, NRG provides steam for humidification, sterilization, producing hot water for the hydronic heating system, and heating domestic water. Chilled water is also used to cool various pieces of equipment.

As a committed energy partner, NRG is familiar with the hospital's mechanical systems and helps identify energy conservation measures. "AGH has made extensive modifications to the building's energy management system that have improved heating and cooling system automation and control," says Del Dausman, Customer Service Engineer

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at NRG. "They've also installed variable-frequency drives on the building's chilled-water pumps and a number of air handlers to improve energy efficiency. This has reduced their energy consumption, which is good for their bottom line as well as the environment."

What's next on AGH's energy "to-do" list? Even more energy conservation measures, including lighting retrofits, upgrading the steam system and the building management system, adding more variable-frequency drives, and conducting retrocommissioning of building systems.

NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh is pleased to be a part of the hospital's energy wellness program and provide guidance and support as AGH continues to serve the Northside for years to come.



Courtesy, West Penn Allegheny Health System

**Allegheny General Hospital is recognized by Solucient, Inc., one of the healthcare industry's leading quality research organizations, as a Top 100 hospital in the country for both orthopaedic surgery and the treatment of strokes.**

## It's Going...Going...Gone!

NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh is a major annual sponsor of the Pittsburgh Pirates. (NRG provides heating and cooling service to the Pirates' PNC Park.) The sponsorship includes visibility in the team's programs, plus an allocation of valuable Pirates merchandise.

While the company's employees are always excited to sport the latest Pirates cap or t-shirt, they're even happier to donate some of the merchandise to nearby Allegheny

Center Alliance Church (ACAC), another NRG customer.

Cynthia Ford, Office Manager at NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh, coordinates the donation program through John Stanko, ACAC's Administrative Pastor. Every year, NRG sends Stanko on a shopping spree at Majestic Outfitters, the PNC Park store that sells Major League Baseball apparel. He selects merchandise—everything from Pirates sweatshirts to

baby bibs—that the church distributes to the area's less fortunate.

"This is the program's third year," says Cynthia. "It's very exciting to be a part of this community outreach effort. It's been a big hit and brings joy to so many."

ACAC's Stanko is pleased with NRG's participation. "This is a wonderfully creative way for NRG to donate to its neighbors in need," says John. "Because of NRG's generosity, we're able to give away items that are new and useful, plus support another good neighbor, the Pittsburgh Pirates, who are so important to the Northside."

Each year the church identifies special community programs where the merchandise can make the most difference. This year's recipients will include needy families of local crime victims. Several children's ministries will also receive merchandise to give as Christmas presents.

"We're committed to rebuilding our city," says John. "We often touch people at the worst moments of their lives. It's heartwarming to see the smiles on people's faces when they get Pirates jerseys they couldn't afford themselves. It gives them a lift. It gives them hope. And that makes it worthwhile."



**Majestic Outfitters employee Andrienna Alford helped John Stanko from Allegheny Center Alliance Church select Pirates merchandise to give to participants in the church's outreach programs.**

# Training, Studying Plays Pays Off

Great sports teams like the Pittsburgh Steelers are always focused on conditioning, training and learning opponents' strengths and weaknesses. Dennis Cummings, Maintenance Lead at NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh, believes his maintenance crew has the same dedicated mindset and willingness to learn "new sets of plays" to keep the plant in peak condition.

Cummings and his team—Kevin Franz, Fred Sattler, Jared Rogowski and Chad Dailey—work 7-to-7 shifts year-round. They are responsible for maintaining all plant mechanical systems—boilers, chillers, fans, pumps and more.

As with everything in today's fast-changing world, there's always something new to know to keep the plant running smoothly. "We're always learning," says Dennis. "All of us attend continuing education classes and special seminars every year. We also read everything we can get our hands on, related to safety, mechanical theory, energy-efficiency improvements and cost savings, and we jointly review that information to find new solutions and opportunities."

According to Del Dausman, NRG's Customer Service Engineer, all this education and think-

ing ahead pays off. "The maintenance team found the fastest-paying energy conservation measure in the plant in the past year," he says. "Rebuilding the feedwater pump was on the maintenance schedule, but when the team took a closer look they recognized that also adding a new high-efficiency pump motor would save energy costs and run cooler."

"New pump motors operate at much higher efficiencies than those installed just 10 to 15 years ago," adds Dennis Cummings. "With some research, we realized that investing \$6,000 in a new premium high-efficiency pump motor would result in a \$25,000-per-year savings through reduced energy costs."

In addition, Duquesne Light offered a rebate as part of the Act 129 program that more than covers the initial cost. These energy-saving ideas add up, and Dennis and his crew continue to look for new opportunities that ultimately benefit NRG customers.

Dennis knows the practical side of steam and chilled-water service, but also the theory behind it and how to put concepts to practical use. That's what ongoing learning and an openness to "new plays" can do. At NRG, saving energy is a team sport.



**Dennis Cummings, Maintenance Lead at NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh, has been with the company for 20 years.**

## From the GM



Those of us who live here know it: Pittsburgh is no longer a coal-based steel town.

With a sustainability page on its web

site and a green guide available for download, the City of Pittsburgh has clearly forged a new identity and made decisions that are not only economically prudent but environmentally responsible: For instance, all traffic lights have been converted to light-emitting diodes (LEDs). Although the upfront cost was about \$2 million, the City expects to recover all of its costs in four years, saving \$500,000 each year thereafter.

It takes vision to make this commitment and more, and NRG applauds the City for its action. NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh is currently forging its own vision for the future that will positively affect the community it serves.

In fact, here's how we see NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh five years down the road. We will have:


- incorporated combined heat and power (NRG+CHP®) into our operation to gain the energy and environmental efficiencies inherent in simultaneously generating electricity and thermal energy;
- further strengthened long-term energy partnerships with our largest customers;
- expanded our network of services to other Northside neighbors, creating more combined heat and power opportunities through efficiencies of scale; and
- kept our focus on NRG's number one priority—a safety culture that is second-to-none.

NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh's plans reflect our commitment to being a cost-effective and environmentally and socially responsible member of the community. We're up to the challenge!

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**NRG Energy Center Pittsburgh's 20-year employees have been acknowledged throughout the year, recently receiving embroidered jackets of their choice (shown here) to officially thank them for their service. Pittsburgh was a different place 20 years ago: in 1990, the Pirates won the National League East Division title and Hall-of-Famer Chuck Noll was still head coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers! Pictured outside the plant are back row (l to r) Dennis Cummings, Maintenance Lead; Steve Wellman, Distribution Mechanic; Bryan Sarti, Distribution Lead; Brian Goss, Lead Plant Operator; and front row (l to r) Rich Boyles, Plant Manager; Donna Pfeiffer, Business Manager; and Fran Fulkerson, Distribution Mechanic.**



## The Heating Season Is Here

It's time to turn up the heat as we move into winter. The fall heating system startup is an excellent time to visually inspect your heating system. Look for areas of insulation that may need repair or leaks that need to be addressed. Keeping your heating system well-insulated and in good operating condition can save energy and reduce your heating costs. You can download our heating season preparation checklist at <http://tinyurl.com/HeatingChecklist>.