

## Savings in the Bank

### Historic hotel reduces energy use, cuts costs

When visitors arrive at the Courtyard by Marriott San Diego Downtown, they can ‘bank’ on a truly one-of-a-kind experience. To check into this 245-room property in the city’s Gaslamp Quarter, guests step up to marble and bronze stations that formerly served as bank teller windows. What was once office space has been transformed into Internet-equipped modern guest rooms. Guests may find themselves meeting in a room that was once a bank vault, complete with the original safe deposit boxes and 47,000-lb circular vault door.

This Courtyard by Marriott, an Energy Center district cooling customer, is housed in the former San Diego Trust & Savings Bank building that opened in 1928 and was converted to a hotel in 1999. The building is a spectacular example of adaptive reuse. As dramatic as that renovation was, the property is undergoing an equally notable transfor-

mation today. Since 2008, it has been steadily improving its energy efficiency with a campaign to cut energy use, led by its staff-driven “Green Team.”

The hotel was one of 14 buildings chosen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to compete in its recent National Building Competition—a contest to see which building can shed the most energy waste. In late October, the EPA reported that the hotel had reduced its energy use intensity (EUI) 8.6 percent during the past year. (EUI represents the energy consumed by a building relative to its size.)

The Courtyard by Marriott’s energy-efficiency measures include tapping chilled-water service from the Energy Center for space cooling, guest ice machines and the kitchen’s walk-in coolers. Since 2008, the hotel has also been busy raising its ENERGY STAR® energy performance score—from 45 to 68 so far (out of a total 100)—through a combination of measures.

“One of our biggest energy-saving projects was to install digital thermostats with occupancy sensors in all guest rooms,” explains Dave Campbell, the hotel’s Chief Engineer. “We also installed economizers for passive cooling.” Other measures include installing compact fluorescent light bulbs in guest rooms and motion-controlled lighting in offices, stairwells, hallways and storage rooms; using computer technology for more efficient boiler operation; and equipping guest room sinks and showers with flow restrictors.



Courtesy The Courtyard by Marriott San Diego. Photo Blink Eye Productions.

**The Courtyard by Marriott San Diego Downtown is housed in the former San Diego Trust & Savings Bank, designed by noted architect William Templeton Johnson.**

The Green Team has involved employees at every level and in every department in its energy efficiency efforts. Employees turn off unattended electrical devices and lights in guest rooms. The hotel has also started a recycling program for all guest rooms and public areas that has enabled the property to double its recycling pickup. Guests help save energy and water by reusing towels and sheets. San Diego Gas & Electric has provided incentives and funding for several retrofit projects and energy audits.

As a result of its upgrades and with the help of the cool summer weather, the Courtyard by Marriott has reduced its chilled-water consumption by 40 percent already this year. NRG Energy Center congratulates the Courtyard by Marriott San Diego Downtown on its energy-savings success.

Courtesy The Courtyard by Marriott San Diego. Photo Blink Eye Productions.



**The massive stainless-steel vault door, which today leads to a hotel meeting room, used to be opened by two bank employees who each knew only part of the combination.**

**I Love a Clean San Diego.** It doesn’t matter if it’s rainy or sunny: five NRG Energy Center San Diego employees are dedicated volunteers who are on the job twice each year as part of “I Love A Clean San Diego” (ILACSD), a program that has promoted environmental education and awareness in San Diego County for more than 50 years. Several months ago, NRG’s volunteers spent the day cleaning up San Diego’s waterfront near the “Unconditional Surrender” sculpture, located adjacent to the USS Midway Museum off Harbor Drive. ILACSD promotes regional awareness of environmental issues including conservation, reducing waste and recycling. Founded as the San Diego War Against Litter Committee in 1954, “I Love A Clean San Diego” was the slogan for the organization’s anti-litter campaign in the 1970s, and in 1980 it became the organization’s name.



# Plant Chief Taps Valuable Experience

As Plant Manager for NRG Energy Center San Diego, Brian Marshall wears many hats. Not only does he manage the operation, maintenance and repair of the plant, he also handles business functions such as accounting, customer billing, budgets and human resources.

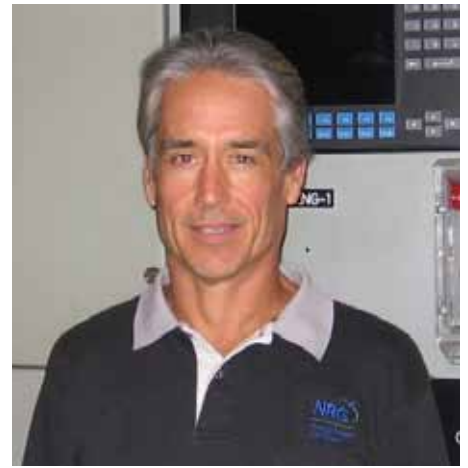
The job requires versatility, and that keeps Brian happy. "I'm doing something I love to do," he says. "I like being a part of the crew—to still operate equipment, troubleshoot problems and repair things. I also enjoy the purely business side of the job, dealing with our customers and employees. The job is a good fit."

Well before wearing those hats, Brian wore a sailor's cap. He entered the U.S. Navy after high school, achieving top scores on his entrance battery tests. Brian qualified for accelerated courses in engineering and plant operations, as well as leadership courses. He served aboard ship around the world and went on to take an advanced steam maintenance course.

After his six-year tour, Brian headed to the private sector but stayed connected to the ocean. He signed on as a certified commercial diver with a dive company on the East Coast. His job was to maintain and document the water intakes of commercial power plants on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. He also dived to maintain nuclear power plants before opting back into plant operations in 1991.

Since then, Brian has worked in the district energy business, first in Los Angeles before moving to San Diego in 1994. He obtained his steam engineer's license in Los Angeles and his building systems maintenance technician certification from the Building Owners and Managers Association. His training and experience have served him well.

"I got a particularly good foundation in the Navy," says Brian. "There was a strict regimen, and I learned how to do it right. I've been able to apply those skills and that discipline throughout my career,



**Brian Marshall, Plant Manager,  
NRG Energy Center San Diego**

and am pleased to use them in my work with NRG Thermal." He adds, "NRG is a terrific company to work for. It's very well managed, and this has turned into an ideal situation for me." Even though Brian doesn't dive anymore, he says it doesn't hurt that the job just happens to be in San Diego, one of his favorite locales. Brian may be reached at [Brian.Marshall@nrgenergy.com](mailto:Brian.Marshall@nrgenergy.com).



**In 2001 Chase Field was the first customer of what was then Northwind Phoenix. Today's NRG Energy Center Phoenix cools the ballpark and nearby downtown buildings using 13,000 tons of chillers at the stadium plus an adjacent 36,000-ton-hr ice-storage plant, shown here. Another cooling plant—located at the Phoenix Convention Center—also helps serve downtown customers.**

## A New Addition to the Family

NRG Thermal LLC, which owns NRG Energy Center San Diego, this summer acquired three significant district energy operations in Arizona from APS Energy Services Company Inc., a subsidiary of Pinnacle West Capital Corp. Now known as NRG Energy Center Phoenix, the former Northwind Phoenix properties include the Phoenix district cooling business unit, the Tucson district energy business unit, and the operations and maintenance of a combined heat and power (CHP) plant at Arizona State

University. The Phoenix system provides chilled water to nearly 30 buildings downtown Phoenix, including Chase Field, home of the Arizona Diamondbacks. In addition to Phoenix, Tucson and San Diego, NRG Thermal owns and operates district energy systems in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Minneapolis and San Francisco, and is building a world-class CHP plant at the new University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro in New Jersey.

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