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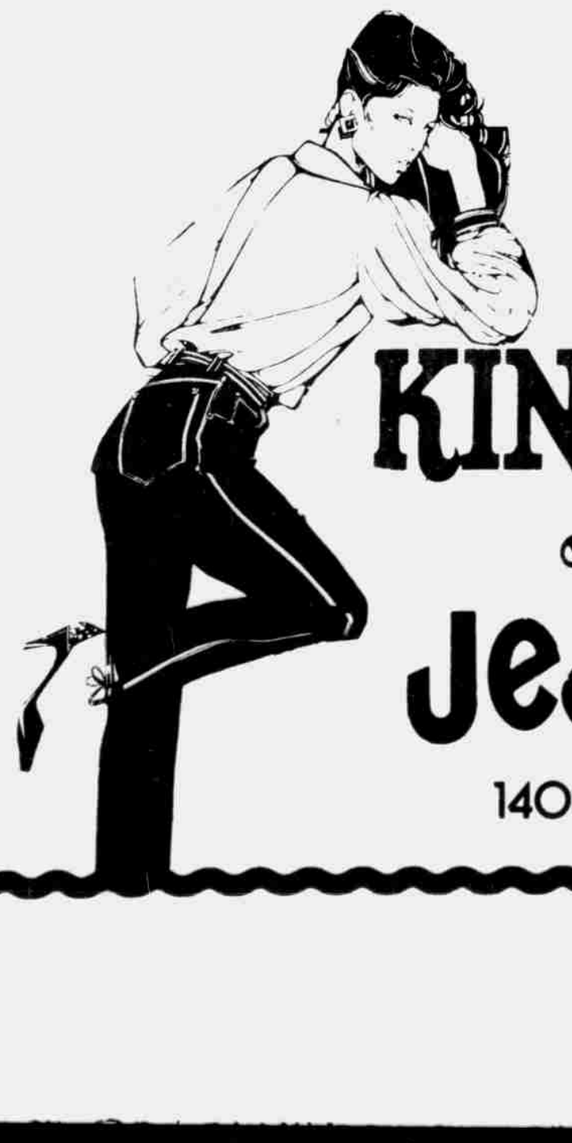

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Energy-efficiency renovation plans to continue for university buildings

By Leslie Boellstorff

Despite prolonged cold weather this winter, utility costs for UNL buildings did not exceed budgeted amounts, said the physical plant director. The budget is based on a more severe winter, said Harley Schrader.

In spite of the good report, energy-efficiency renovation plans continue campus-wide.

Renovations improving the energy efficiency of the Nebraska Union should be completed by the end of this summer, said Daryl Swanson, director of the Nebraska Union, Tuesday.

Bids for the project will be let at the end of this month or the beginning of next month, Swanson said, and work on the project should begin in June. The cost of the project is estimated at $297,900, of which $137,950 is a federal grant. The NU Board of Regents has approved the use of $160,000 from bond reserves for the rest of the project's funding.

The savings created by the improvements should pay for the project in less than seven years, Swanson said. Currently, utilities in the Nebraska and East Unions cost about $300,000 a year, Swanson said. The energy costs are so high because the unions are open more hours a week than any other campus building. Also, there is a lot of traffic moving in and out of the building, which increases energy use, Swanson said.

There are three major aspects of the Nebraska Union renovation project, Swanson said. The first involves replacing all the old windows in the original part of the building — the south third of the building. Swanson said the windows are being replaced for aesthetic as well as energy-conscious reasons. The deteriorating windows marr the building's appearance and cause the loss of heated or air-conditioned air, Swanson said.

New windows

The window system on the north side of the building will be improved as the second aspect of the project, he said. Fifty percent of the glass on the second floor will be replaced by blank panels, Swanson said. The panels will have glass on the exterior, to retain the appearance of the building. The rest of the glass will be double-paned, he said. Both window replacement projects will cost $183,000.

The third part of the project will be replacing the fume hoods in the kitchen, Swanson said. The present hoods were installed in 1959. The hoods let heated or air conditioned air directly outside, causing energy waste, Swanson said. The new hoods would have both a supply and exhaust function, allowing the recirculation of the filtered air. Replacement of the hoods will cost $68,500.

Insulation

An additional part of the project involves insulating the attic of the original building, costing $47,400.

A fourth part in renovating the unions' heating and cooling air system would cost $307,000 and has been delayed.

The union renovations are part of a campus-wide effort to increase the efficiency of university buildings. Schrader said the list of needed work to improve energy efficiency far exceeds the amount of dollars available for such projects.

The physical plant has completed most of the "quick-fix and cheapie" projects like turning down thermostats and switching from incandescent lighting to fluorescent lighting, Schrader said. What remains are the "real" projects — replacing single-glazed, double-hung windows that "leak like a sieve," insulating walls and roofs and improving the forced-air systems in many buildings.

Available funds

"We're doing the work as the money becomes available," Schrader said. Applications for federal grants to help fund such building modifications have been made, he said.

The physical plant anticipates spending $80,000 to $90,000 on insulating and rebuilding the roof on Baker Hall on East Campus. Replacing windows in Burnett Hall will cost about $125,000, Schrader said.

Insulation in a small building would cost $10,000 to $15,000, he said, while insulating a larger building may cost as much as $40,000.

The physical plant could easily spend $1 million on renovating buildings to increase their energy efficiency, Schrader said. Because spending that amount isn't high on the Nebraska Legislature's or the UNL administration's priority lists the physical plant has applied for federal matching grants through the state energy office, and is making improvements as money becomes available.

Last year, the physical plant had $4.5 million for utilities, Schrader said. This amount included 150 academic and general purpose buildings on both campuses. It did not include utility costs for residence halls, the Bob Devaney Sports Center or the Nebraska Center, which designate utility funds in their own budgets.

Residence halls

Energy conservation measures saved each residence hall occupant about $40 a year in room and board, Housing Director Douglas Zatechka said.

For the fiscal year beginning July 1, $1.1 million is designated for energy costs for the 11 residence halls, he said. This is on increase from the $780,000 budgeted two years ago, he said.

Attempts to conserve energy in the residence halls include insulating roofs, extending the use of water used to steam heat the buildings (using it until it cools to 110 degrees instead of the 170 degree temperature at which it was previously piped back to the physical plant and saving approximately $25,000 to $40,000 for each hall), installing reducers in showerheads so they use 1.9 to 2.5 gallons of water per minute instead of the previous 8 gallons a minute, and changing lights from incandescent to fluorescent. The caulking of most of the residence halls has also been completed, Zatechka said. Thermostats have been turned down to 68 to 70 degrees, he said.

Professor says primitive Indians viewed as hindrance to whites

Tribes of primitive South American Indians, who until recently had no exposure with the outside world, are finding themselves in the same cowboys and Indians situation that took place in the United States, said Raymond Hames, UNL professor of anthropology.

Hames' lecture and accompanying film Tuesday was sponsored by the International Educational Services, which annually presents a Global Affairs Program. Hames spent 18 months studying primitive Indian tribes in Venezuela.

The Brazilian government, Hames said, in an effort to develop the Amazon Basin in the nation's interior, is exploiting the land without regard for the Indians living there.

Brazil has a weak economy, he said, so it encourages multinational corporations to invest and develop the Amazon Basin.

Brazil's government offers the multinational corporations tax incentives and sells them large blocks of land very cheaply — as low as 18 cents an acre, Hames said.

The government, burdened with overcrowding on coastal areas, is trying to get peasants to migrate to the Amazon Basin to begin a new economic life.

This is also true in Columbia and Venezuela, where tribes of Indians are competing with cattle ranchers for the land.

The Indians are viewed by the white settlers as animals and as a hindrance to development, Hames said.

Historically, the Indians could do little to prevent the exploitation of their lands because the government exercises little power in undeveloped areas.

Fortunately, Hames said, efforts made by Indian groups who are starting to organize politically and international support organizations are beginning to help the Indians have some voice, however small, concerning their fate.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund now require countries to submit an environmental and social impact report before loans aiding development are approved, he said.