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Cummings Props.' 900 Cummings Center receives Energy Star label

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According to Gary Gresh, sustainability manager at Cummings Properties, 900 Cummings Center has earned the U.S. EPA Energy Star label. According to the Energy Star website, this is the first facility in the city to be awarded this recognition.

EPA's rigorous national energy performance rating system provides a 1 to 100 scale to assess how efficiently buildings use energy relative to similar buildings nationwide. Those that achieve a score of 75 or higher are eligible to display the Energy Star label.

EPA estimates that buildings that have earned this award use on average 40% less energy than similar buildings and release 35% less carbon dioxide into the environment. Reportedly, more than 6,000 facilities have earned this distinction since the Energy Star for buildings was launched in 1995, although 900 Cummings Center is now only the second office building on the North Shore on this prestigious list.

The 200,000 s/f 900 Cummings Center, owned and managed by Cummings Props., is the 5th property in the company's portfolio to receive this recognition. Other commercial buildings with the Energy Star designation include 92 Montvale Ave. in Stoneham and 196 Boston Rd. in Medford.

Two buildings at The Meadows, 370 and 420 Hemenway in Marlborough, earned the Energy Star Homes award in 2003. The Meadows is an independent living retirement community and part of the New Horizons Retirement community. Combined, the two buildings house more than 130 apartments, which are equipped with independently controlled heating and air conditioning systems. Heavily insulated walls and energy efficient lighting help decrease operating costs and increase comfort for residents.

According to Energy Star, benefits of an Energy Star home include using less energy, reducing harmful emissions and decreasing associated health costs.

Gresh pointed out that Cummings Properties has a tradition of developing energy efficient, cost-saving buildings. In addition to the five Energy Star properties, its most recent projects include 42 North Rd. in Sudbury, which is being built to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, and TradeCenter 128 in Woburn, which has been awarded LEED Gold pre-certification for its core and shell development. Gresh also noted that photovoltaic solar panels have recently been installed on TradeCenter 128's 7-story garage.

Sustainability improvements geared towards reducing energy use and increasing energy efficiency have been implemented throughout the Cummings portfolio, according to Gresh. Rooftop HVAC systems were replaced with more efficient models, motion sensors were installed in all indoor office spaces and all light fixtures were switched out to the more energy efficient T-8 florescent lights.