

PHILHARMONIC CENTER ‘GOING GREEN’

Arts complex implements innovative energy conservation program

The Philharmonic Center for the Arts this month implemented the first phase of its “Going Green” energy conservation initiative, which will create a state-of-the-art environmentally friendly mode of operations at the center while saving the Phil more than \$85,000 per year in expenses.

The first phase of the five-phase project upgrades the Phil’s air-conditioning system with two new magnetic chillers, two new cooling towers and four new pumps. It is the first major upgrade to the air-conditioning system since 1988. Later this fall, the Phil will install solar panels on the plant roof that will be used to heat water in the performance hall.

The Phil’s “Going Green” initiative is supported by a \$500,000 Florida Clean Energy Grant, which was awarded through the governor’s office earlier this year. The Phil was the only organization in Collier County to receive the grant award, which is being matched through private donations.

“This is an important and exciting project that helps make us a leader in energy cost reduction in our region,” said Philharmonic Center CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen. “Going Green will be an ongoing project for us.”

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Other elements of the “Going Green” initiative include replacing lights, fixtures and appliances with more energy efficient models as well as sealing, shading and renovating entry points to better retain cool air.

The “Going Green” program at the Phil was developed over the past two years. By the end of the current season, the Phil is expected to qualify for certification by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, an internationally recognized green building certification system.

Building Superintendent Alex Pena, who has been with the Phil since before it opened, called the “Going Green” project “a big step for the organization. It’s going to bring us up to speed with the top energy plants in the region. We’ve been working toward this for many years. The state grant made the decision easier.”

Pena added that this season’s program “is just the beginning. We’re looking at LED lighting and other cutting edge energy technology for the future.”

For more information on the Phil’s “Going Green” program, please contact Ashley Carter at (239) 254-2732.