



PROPERTY SOLUTIONS

TOP 5 ENERGY RETROFIT TIPS FOR LONG ISLAND PROPERTY OWNERS

Deep Energy retrofits can unlock major energy savings and improve property value, but only if done right. The scope of these projects can depend on an owner's budget and the property's condition. They frequently involve the replacement of a building's existing lighting and HVAC systems, its windows and envelope/insulation, and even other major appliances.

At STRATCO, we've worked on hundreds of retrofit and electrification projects across Long Island, and we've seen where building owners most often stumble. Whether you're managing a co-op in Hempstead or a garden-style rental in Patchogue, these five common mistakes can cost time, money, and even access to incentives.

TIP #1: Apply Early for Incentives

Incentive programs whether they are offered by the state or your local utility can often operate on a first-come, first-served basis. Many owners assume the best time for an energy retrofit is after they've gotten the most out of their existing systems and a replacement is required. Unfortunately, by then, budgets may be gone or deadlines passed. That's why it's best to do an energy audit now so you can plan your renovations to lock in rebates while keeping tenant turnover or compliance deadlines in mind. This step can also ensure you receive the funding you are allocated from programs sooner and give you more time to deal with any possible issues that may arise with your application.

TIP #2: Don't Skip the Envelope

Too often, owners install high-efficiency heat pumps or boilers without upgrading windows, walls, or roofs. The result? Oversized systems that underperform and higher operating costs. When planning your energy retrofit opt for approaches that bundle insulation, air sealing, and windows to shrink your load and increase the potential incentives you may receive.

TIP #3: Choosing the Right Scope for Your Building Type

What works for luxury multifamily apartments won't fly in commercial or industrial spaces. Many owners waste time considering options that don't match their building's needs or funding eligibility. Make sure that you're hiring contractors who understand the difference in project scopes between walk-ups, garden apartments, co-ops, and townhome complexes. The project manager should approach each of these retrofits with their own strategies that align with your energy saving targets.

TIP #4: Consider Alternative Financing Tools

Upgrading your building is expensive work, but it doesn't have to be unaffordable. There are a range of financing options that most Long Island owners never use:

- Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Programs (C-PACE)
- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority - Smart Energy Loans
- Municipal bonding for public housing and nonprofit retrofits

TIP #5: Don't Neglect Stakeholder Communication

Boards, tenants, and staff often feel blindsided when major construction starts. Without clear communication, electrification projects in co-ops, condos, or multifamily rentals can face delays, resistance, or even legal issues. Fortunately, resident education and outreach can mitigate concerns when it comes to larger retrofits. Examples could include slide decks, letters, and Q&A sessions.