



INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS

*White Paper*

# How an Infrastructure Update Can Revitalize Your Facility's Future





## Introduction

Commercial buildings are up against competing forces. They're expected to be more energy efficient while also meeting rising demands for electricity. They need to be more cost-effective while maintaining uptime around the clock. And occupants want buildings to adapt to their ever-evolving needs, but they're also interested in sustainability and wellness metrics like water consumption and indoor air quality.

The underlying thread through all of these issues is the need for modern infrastructure.

As of year-end 2023, the average commercial building in the U.S. is 54 years old.<sup>1</sup> Occupants can't afford to rely on the original heating and air conditioning, plumbing, and lighting of a half century-old building. Neither can property owners—outdated systems can lower property value, promote an unhealthy environment, and even cost more to maintain than an overhaul would. With advancements in technology and energy efficiencies leading to less down time and less reactive maintenance, upgraded facility systems can save your building money in the long run. The pandemic is over, and with occupants exploring the world outside their homes again, they now look for the facilities that support their health, ease their safety concerns, and make them feel at home all over again.

Learn below how improved HVAC systems, updated plumbing systems, and cost-effective electricity can turn your building into a modern facility—no matter its age.

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**Modern infrastructure is necessary for addressing the complex challenges posed by increased demand for sustainability, occupant comfort, around-the-clock uptime, and cost-effectiveness.**

## Creating comfort with upgraded HVAC systems

We rely on indoor spaces as an escape from unreasonable weather. But if the atmospheric conditions inside a facility don't fare much better than the conditions outside, occupants won't feel the enjoyable environment your building could be. The only thing they'll feel is uncomfortable.

*An underperforming or poorly maintained HVAC system can create a negative experience and a negative reputation for your facility. Employee productivity, occupant health, and policy compliancy may suffer, as well. You can avoid these issues and more with a modern HVAC system.*

## Better temperatures for better occupant comfort

Employees and everyday occupants agree: the right indoor climate is crucial for a productive environment, something that too many workplaces get wrong. According to a CareerBuilder survey, 46% of workers say their office is either too hot or too cold.<sup>2</sup> The combined discomfort of extreme temperature with stale air negatively impacts the perception of cleanliness of your facility. Without the right systems in place, your occupants and your building itself may be subjected to harmful, bacteria-riddled air.

*The potential risk for mold growth, allergens, and virus transmissions are greater when buildings aren't properly ventilated. These safety concerns can spell problems for your occupants, your team members, and your compliancy needs.*

Efficient HVAC machines and routine filter replacement can greatly improve your facility's indoor air quality (IAQ), allowing your occupants to work comfortably and breathe easily. With intelligent HVAC system controls in place, your occupants will have one less distraction, and one more reason to think positively about your culture.

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## More efficiencies mean more savings

Most air conditioners and heaters last around 15 to 20 years<sup>3</sup> – a lifespan that's typically full of breakdowns and repairs. While reactive maintenance of this nature may seem less expensive than the cost of a replacement HVAC system, these small fixes can add up to large sunken costs over time. By making the upgrade call, you can welcome a more manageable heating and air conditioning system—one that will see cost savings from day one.

Automated controls and energy-efficient machines work to provide the optimal levels of comfort and need without wasting excess electricity, making it easy to generate savings on your facility's power usage. The same technology and efficiency breakthroughs seen in occupant-facing HVAC systems can create even larger savings for your facility's high-volume chillers, mission critical cooling systems, and more.





## Plumbing that's safe, efficient, and built to last

Of all the areas we may take for granted in our buildings, adequate plumbing ranks high on too many lists. What's more out of sight than something in the walls? But if the pipes and fixtures in your facility haven't been touched in years, you might be unknowingly creating costly problems for yourself – or might be around the corner from one waiting to happen.

As a key component to your infrastructure, care for your building's plumbing is essential to creating a clean, safe, and efficient environment. If old pipes have slowly been corroding, a potential leak or pipe burst could suddenly leave your entire operation temporarily out of commission. While a leak in a bathroom can create an inconvenience to your occupants, a leak inside your walls could damage insulation, drywall, and electrical wiring. Ensuring your pipes are secure means the rest of your infrastructure, from your lighting to your water chiller, are out of harm's way as well.



## Conserving water and costs

Modern plumbing systems have the technology in place to prevent excess water usage. Your facility restrooms, HVAC machines, water heaters, and more can be optimized to use no more than the amount of water the job calls for. And with less water going down the drain, you'll have less money following it.

Plumbing that focuses on water efficiency and conservation may help your building become LEED certified, as well. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) provides a framework and rating system for green building categorization, proving that your building is certified for sustainability.<sup>4</sup>

*By partnering with a facility services provider who understands LEED qualifications, your building can lower energy costs, use less waste, and improve its property value in exchange for a bragworthy certification. This certification can greatly help inform the public about your building's transformation into a safe and modern facility.*

## Electrical compliance is key

Protecting your team from electrical hazards is a no-brainer. It's also a liability and a regulatory must in order to stay compliant and avoid hefty fines. As a facility manager, it's less than ideal to spend each week running the risk of non-compliance and on-the-job accidents.

Providing the necessary safety training to your team is an added step for compliancy and peace of mind. Working with a knowledgeable partner can help keep all areas of your infrastructure in check.

| A reliable power system, paired with routine proactive maintenance,  
can keep your electrical distribution safely operating for years to come.

## No more down time

Just like any kind of infrastructure, the right maintenance is essential to getting the most out of your system and preventing any critical conditions again. With high-efficiency electricity in place, facility managers like you can rely less on sudden, reactive maintenance and enjoy more uninterrupted service. And with the right facility partner, your systems can even adopt a routine of preventative testing, analysis, and energy assessment to prevent any future down time.





## Improved infrastructure, improved experiences

People want to know that sustainability, well-being, and reliability are top priorities in the buildings they occupy. The best way to demonstrate that commitment is to keep building systems running smoothly.

When your infrastructure is well-planned and maintained, occupants can tell the difference. They might not be directly looking for a building's infrastructure, but they'll feel when it's lacking in an instant. Improved IAQ, efficient water use, and modern, reliable lighting are the necessities for building a comfortable environment and a better brand identity for your building. While the age of your building should signify how far your business has come, the infrastructure shouldn't make it so obvious.

Updating your building infrastructure can be fraught with potential pitfalls, from cost overruns to technology challenges. Work with a professional team to navigate the methods, technologies, and practices that will lead to success. For a single provider who can help make it happen, see how ABM can revitalize your facility's future.

Sources:

1. [Enhanced Commercial Property Database](#)
2. [Workers Are Literally Fighting Over Temperature in the Office](#)
3. [HVAC System Life Cycles: How Long Should They Really Last?](#)
4. [Value of LEED](#)

Modernized, optimized building infrastructure is within reach.

Find out how we can make it possible for you by calling **866.624.1520** or visiting **ABM.com**.