

# SPARROW HOSPITAL



## SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE FACILITIES

## PROFILE

**LOCATION:** 215 E. Michigan Avenue  
Lansing, Michigan

**OWNER:** Sparrow Health System

Sparrow Hospital marks 116 years of service to the greater Lansing community in 2012. Dedication to their Patients and premier healthcare are not the only distinguishing features of this 587-bed hospital, the flagship facility of the Sparrow Healthcare System. Over a decade of work towards leadership in environmentally responsible buildings, facilities, and operations has set Sparrow Hospital apart.

Sparrow Health System President and CEO Dennis Swan explains why certification by the Society of Environmentally Responsible Facilities (SERF) is important to them: “We continue to stay focused on responding to the expectations of our Patients, staff, donors and the region to build and operate our facilities in a clean, green and efficient manner. Meeting SERF’s certification criteria is another demonstration of our commitment.”

In 2008 Sparrow opened its new West Tower adding new adult and pediatric emergency rooms, 34 bed ICU/CCU, 43,000 square foot Heart Center and an additional 58 private Patient rooms. The Tower features low flow sink faucets with electric eye activation and water saver toilets that meet the current water conservation

standards. Additionally all lighting in the tower meets the standards of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). LED (light emitting diode) lights are also used wherever possible. The helipad on the Tower roof features a freeze-melt function that also meets these standards.

In the renovations that the hospital has undergone in recent years, recycling was encouraged, including all the metal from the decommissioned boiler room and metal seats from the redevelopment of their auditorium. Sparrow’s overall philosophy is: “As projects come up, the main goal is to minimize land filling.”

All of the windows in the facility are thermal paned, and wherever applicable ducts have been insulated,



[SERFgreen.org](http://SERFgreen.org)

reducing energy loss into unconditioned space. The paint standard used within the facility is low or no VOC (volatile organic compound).

The grounds surrounding the hospital building are just as environmentally sound as its construction. Bike racks are provided and a bus stop near the main entrance encourages green commuting. Additionally, the plants in the area are generally native Michigan, minimizing the need for fertilizer, pesticides, and irrigation.



As early as 1999, Sparrow showed their commitment to the environment by decommissioning its incinerator five years before such an action was mandated by the federal government. Sparrow's new power plant features a Siemens building automation system, with the main hospital being supported with a Johnson Control building automation system. This allows Sparrow's plant operations to monitor conditions throughout the entire hospital, maximize performance, and identify faults in the system in real time to minimize time spent diagnosing problems. When using a plate and frame heating system in the winter months, Sparrow reduces its energy costs by cooling their systems with naturally chilled water. These practices demonstrate



Sparrow's extraordinary commitment to **Practical Environmental Stewardship™**, a hallmark of all facilities certified by SERF.

Operations at Sparrow Hospital are just as important as the building structure when it comes to environmental sustainability. The year 2004 marked the inaugural of many of Sparrow's more sustainable practices. That year, by training the staff in more selective disposal practices, the hospital was able to reduce its regulated medical waste from a daily Patient average of 12 pounds to 3.5 pounds and has remained at that low level since that time.

Sparrow also reduced its mercury use by 98%, and removed all mercury sphygmomanometers and thermometers from their facilities. The tubes that were



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used in the laboratories were switched from 7 ml to 5 ml, reducing regulated medical waste by 7,800 pounds. Mattress pads were switched from disposable to re-useable, saving 55,000 pounds from landfill. In 2004, the hospital was able to recycle 1.9 million pounds of paper (or the equivalent of 2,375 trees) by recycling old and obsolete Patient records.

Sparrow has been named a *Partner for Change* by the Hospitals for a Healthier Environment for their leadership role in environmental stewardship. Sparrow was one of only a dozen hospitals in the nation to receive this designation, and was further awarded the *Sustained Environmental Leadership Award* in recognition of their continued pursuit of excellence.

For Sparrow, environmental concerns rank highly, as emphasized by Reza Tavakoli, Environmental Services Director for Sparrow. “We care about our Patients – at the same time we care about the well-being of the environment – this is very important to us.”



## *Each year, Sparrow recycles:*

- » 4,400 pounds of batteries
- » Over 12,000 pounds of cooking grease
- » 2.4 tons of fluorescent lamps
- » 58 tons of wood pallets
- » Single use devices, saving over 5000 pounds from landfills
- » Over 360,000 pounds of cardboard

## *Sparrow donates:*

- » Over 2,000 pounds of prepared food to local food banks each year
- » Computers, monitors, printers, and cell phones to schools and non-profit organizations
- » Mattresses to local missions
- » Furniture to hospitals and non-profit organizations



**For more information contact:  
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**SERF** makes environmental certification affordable and more accessible to building owners, managers and developers. SERF leverages its certification program to advance the concept of *Practical Environmental Stewardship*.™

**SERF** affirms that with private property rights come *responsibilities* – not least of which are the responsibilities to construct, rehabilitate, and operate our homes and facilities, enhance our communities and minimize environmental impact.

**SERF** recognizes that protection of our environment is the duty of every steward of the land, and such stewards who act accordingly should be recognized and encouraged.

**SERF** holds that honest cost-benefit analysis should be applied to building improvements and systems intended to help the environment. To endure, sustainability must be affordable.

**SERF** is an inclusive organization which provides live and online forums for members to share methods to cost-effectively meet our goals.

**SERF** builds future generations of environmentally responsible property owners. Our examples and support can teach and endow future generations to live in harmony with our planet and to conserve its precious resources.

**SERF** *Catch the wave ~ get certified!*

**PRACTICAL ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**



**SERFgreen.org**