The Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC) provides advice and analyses enabling private and public facilities in the State of Illinois to increase their economic viability through the efficient use of energy resources. SEDAC is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in partnership with ComEd and Ameren Illinois Utilities and provides valuable services at no cost to for-profit businesses and public facilities. SEDAC is managed by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and supported by the 360 Energy Group.

(RETRO-COMMISSIONING)

What's the difference between energy auditing and retro-commissioning?

If you don’t know the answer to this question, fear not. You’re not alone. Since we began offering SEDAC’s retro-commissioning services last year, this is the most commonly asked question we receive.

First, let’s discuss energy audits, also called energy assessments or evaluations. When SEDAC is working with our design assistance clients, we provide them with detailed analyses that offer practical, sustainable measures for improvement. This may include retrofitting outdated lighting systems with newer lamps or upgrading a boiler to a more efficient model.

With retro-commissioning, or RCx, we’re focusing more on operational and maintenance improvements, often requiring less capital investments to achieve significant savings.

Whereas nearly any facility could benefit from an energy audit, retro-commissioning best serves buildings that may have issues that began during design and construction, or that have developed over years of use. Perhaps it experienced a change in occupancy or a major change in operation. In either of these cases, mechanical, electrical and controls systems must be updated to maintain optimal efficiency.

To add to potential confusion, there are three terms that are used to describe the process. While they are occasionally used interchangeably, they are not quite the same thing.

Commissioning is the process for new buildings of ensuring systems are designed, installed, tested, and deemed capable of being operated and maintained according to the building’s needs.

Re-commissioning is when the process is applied to a building that has previously been commissioned, usually done every three to five years to maintain optimal operations and performance.

Retro-commissioning uses the same process, but is applied to existing buildings that have never been commissioned.

Benefits of RCx. RCx offers many benefits to those who follow through with the recommendations. By increasing the operational efficiency of the building, facilities that complete the process receive lower energy bills, and often require fewer service and maintenance calls. Further, increased efficiency extends equipment service life, increases property value, and usually creates a more productive and comfortable facility. The average simple payback experienced by our clients has been less than six months.

SEDAC RCx Program Eligibility. At this time, SEDAC only provides retro-commissioning services to public entities in either ComEd or Ameren Illinois.
To participate in the Smart Energy Design Assistance Program, contact us at: (800) 214-7954 or info@SEDAC.org
Smart Energy Design Assistance Center, 1 Saint Marys Road, Champaign, IL  61820
www.sedac.org

Utilities’ service territories. ComEd and Ameren Illinois also provide RCx services to eligible private sector buildings.

Where applicable, SEDAC RCx studies may involve an assessment of energy savings opportunities eligible for incentives through the ComEd, Ameren Illinois, and DCEO program offerings, and in all such cases the incentive levels established by those programs will be used.

To learn more about retro-commissioning services in Illinois, please visit:

SEDAC:  http://RCx.SEDAC.org