

Department Spotlight: The Power Plant

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In addition to boilers, the plant also contains chillers or a cooling system. These huge “air conditioners” work much the same way boilers do but instead of adding heat to water or other fluids, they are removing it. Chilled water is distributed to cooling coils and transfers heat from the air to the chilled water, which cools and dehumidifies the air stream. The process then starts over.

The Power Plant is a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week operation. A staff of six watch-engineers continuously monitors the gauges on four boilers and three chillers, records the readings and makes maintenance repairs. Also monitored is the Building Management System, which controls heating and air-conditioning systems in the hospital.

What’s more, the staff is responsible for maintaining and monitoring three hospital emergency power generators. The Power Plant staff adheres to a strict testing schedule to ensure that the emergency generators can supply power at a moment’s notice.

Throughout the year, hospital temperatures range from 70 to 74 degrees in the patient care areas and offices. However, temperatures in the operating rooms are a constant 67 degrees.

Boilers and chillers operate continuously, except when a fire alarm is called. In the hospital, the heating and air-conditioning systems will automatically shut down. But the

systems in the power plant have to be manually turned off to prevent damage to the system.

Constructed in 1952, the plant was initially outfitted with three boilers. It was not until 1974, with the addition of the F and G wings, that the hospital installed a fourth boiler and two chillers for central air conditioning. In 2006 with the building of the D Wing, a third chiller was installed.

“It is reassuring to know that even after we all leave for the day, the Power Plant staff maintains a watchful eye over the facility to ensure that our patients, staff and visitors are provided the best in physical plant comfort and safety,” said Richard C. Bie, director of engineering.

Extending a Helping Hand to the South Nassau Family

Times are hard. With the faltering economy and rising unemployment, what better time to bring back South Nassau’s Food Bank for employees?

The Food Bank is now accepting donations of nonperishable foods, gift cards from local grocers and cash. (Personal checks will not be accepted.) Donations can be dropped off at the Department of Volunteer Services on the ground floor of the hospital opposite the Dietary Department.

Examples of nonperishable foods include canned vegetables, soups, rice, flour, cereal, peanut butter and powdered milk.

You can drop off your monetary donations and gift cards to Fran Crispi, executive associate (ext. 3939), or Sandy Bertuccio, executive secretary (ext. 3480), in administration.

While donations are not tax deductible, you can give knowing that your contributions will help the South Nassau family.

If you need food assistance or more information, call Mary Gillespie in Social Work at 632-4087. All calls are confidential.



An Employee Too Good to Let Go

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“This is my power plant and I enjoy coming in,” said Mr. Sposato who immigrated from Calabria, Italy, in 1960, and still speaks with an Italian accent. “This is the best crew I’ve ever seen in my life. We all work well together.”

He dismisses any plans to retire in the near future. “As long as I have my health, I’ll keep coming,” he said.