

UBC'S NEW PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES BUILDING CLAIMS SIX AWARDS: HAS ANY RECENT BUILDING IN B.C. WON MORE?

For Nick Maile, the only thing better than having a building he helped plan and develop win a series of major architecture awards, it's seeing the people who use the building truly enjoying it. The development manager for UBC Properties Trust believes the university's new Pharmaceutical Sciences Building is "architecturally pleasing, but any building, no matter how beautiful, if it doesn't work for the students and faculty, it's not a success. This one, though, is incredibly lively – people like to be in it and they use every space."

INCREDIBLY LIVELY AND ENERGY EFFICIENT

"At UBC, we are trying to be on the leading edge of sustainability and energy efficiency," says Nick, "but it's definitely a challenge with a building like this, where there is a data centre in the basement plus a lot of a lot of laboratories and many fume hoods." (Fume hoods limit exposure to hazardous chemicals or toxic fumes, but they are energy-guzzlers: one fume hood alone can use more energy than three typical B.C. homes.)

For help, UBC turned to BC Hydro's New Construction Program, which provides funding for an energy-modeling study – a simulation of how a building might function throughout a full year if it's designed and built with a variety of energy-saving measures – along with additional financial incentives for implementing those measures.

For the PSB, the energy-saving measures include capturing waste heat from the data centre and recycling it into the building, as well as daylight sensors and a low-temperature water system. Together, these measures are estimated to add up to about 1.2 million kilowatt hours of savings every year over a similar building that does not include them.

BIG CHALLENGES, BIG REWARDS

The University of British Columbia's Pharmaceutical Sciences Building was, says UBC's Nick Maile, "a challenging but rewarding project. We hired the architects in October 2009, broke ground in June 2010, and it was completed in August 2012. That's quite tight for a 280,000 square foot project! But it turned out beautifully."





In addition, says Nick, “I just found out that we will receive a great incentive from BC Hydro for installing these measures, which may be a small percentage of the overall construction budget, but it’s still significant. It really does help, because we can give that money back to the Pharmacy people to use for long-term operations. So not only does the university win by saving on energy use, the department wins as well.”

THE DEPARTMENT WINS IN OTHER WAYS, TOO

Wayne Riggs, professor and dean pro tem of the UBC faculty of pharmaceutical sciences, called the PSB “wonderful” in an article in the Globe and Mail (May 2013), but also pointed out that it also “definitely does help” with recruiting top talent. Star hires, attracted by the facility, include researchers from as far away as Dundee, Scotland.

Officially opened on September 18, 2012, the Pharmaceutical Sciences Building (PSB) was designed by Montreal’s Saucier + Perrotte Architectes and Vancouver’s Hughes Condon Marler Architects. That same year, it received a Canadian Architect Award of Excellence, followed by “Best in Show” for 2013 from the Ontario Association of Architects and a flurry of other major awards, culminating in being named “Best Lab” by prestigious UK-based design and lifestyle magazine Wallpaper*.

Wallpaper* writer Hadani Ditmars described the building as “a kind of cubist tree,” while architect Gilles Saucier has said it was designed “as a way to represent two trees interlacing like the roots coming down to the ground.”

However you describe it, everyone seems to agree that the dramatic glass exterior, double atriums that allow light to flood in, and somewhat eccentric, wandering staircases make for a building that is as exciting to look at as it is pleasurable to work in.

AND IT’S EASY ON THE ENERGY BILLS

“It’s a big, complex, energy-intensive building,” says Nick Maile, “very rewarding to work on.” With the help of BC Hydro’s New Construction Program, it’s also easy on the energy bills.

ABOUT THE NEW CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The New Construction Program provides financial incentives for new commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential buildings and major retrofits. If you qualify, BC Hydro will fund up to 100 per cent of an energy-modeling study that can be used towards your LEED certification and to apply for FortisBC capital incentives (some restrictions apply).

To find out more, visit bchydro.com/construction or call 1 866 522 4713.

UBC PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES BUILDING

OWNER:

UBC Properties Trust

CONSTRUCTION MANAGER:

Ledcor

ARCHITECTS:

Saucier + Perrotte Architectes

Hughes Condon Marler Architects

STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT:

Glotman Simpson

MECHANICAL ENGINEER:

Stantec Mechanical

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:

Applied Engineering Solutions

ENERGY MODELLER:

Stantec

BUILDING START DATE:

July 2010

BUILDING COMPLETION DATE:

September 2012

TOTAL AREA:

280,000 square feet

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST:

\$97 million

