

New Bedford Housing Authority - All in On COVID Safety for Residents and Staff

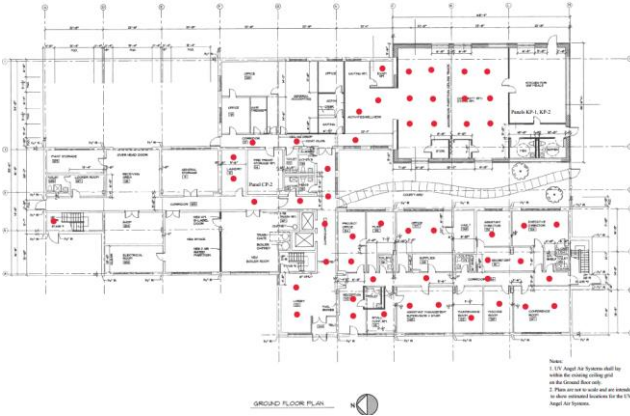
For years, the New Bedford Housing Authority (NBHA) has been an innovative leader in energy efficiency, resiliency, and most recently the use of solar renewable energy. NBHA is a mission-driven Public Housing Authority that has displayed public housing acumen during difficult periods of declining budgets, Federal administration changes, and now, COVID. The pandemic has established new and ongoing challenges for public housing management and operations in their efforts to keep residents and staff safe. Executive Director Steven Beauregard, and Ms. Cynthia Spence, Director of Modernization, Planning & Development have committed to doubling their efforts in resident and staff safety while maintaining NBHA's daily operational services.



Boa Vista Tower's High-Rise Building

NBHA was established in 1938 and continues to be an integral part of the fabric of the city. With 1,743 federal public housing units and 760 state aided units, NBHA services over 6,000 individuals by providing safe, well maintained, and affordable housing units. In addition, NBHA administers nearly 1,800 federally funded rental vouchers through HUD's Voucher Choice Program. This allows NBHA to provide rental assistance payments to property owners to assist another 3,300 men, women, and children in securing affordable housing. Funding for NBHA primarily comes from the federal government through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the collection of resident rents.

The New Bedford Housing Authority is all in on mitigating COVID risk to residents and staff through their recent installation and use of UV Angel Clean Air™ technology and other CDC recommended procedures related to cleaning and disinfection. Installed into existing and/or new construction and designed directly into a traditional ceiling light fixture, UV Angel Clean Air™ is a quiet, unobtrusive environmental disinfection system that uses ultraviolet light to kill viruses, bacteria, and fungi in the air 24/7, 365 days a year. The UV Angel Clean Air™ products operate independent of the central HVAC systems and pulls room air into a sealed high-intensity UV-C light chamber where the air is continuously treated. The clean treated air is then returned to the room. Independent studies have shown it safely neutralizes pathogens in occupied spaces with up to 99.99% effectiveness. This approach effectively targets pathogens at the room level, where disease transmission begins as people are present and gathering. The units also wirelessly connected to UV Angel's data cloud, providing real-time information on system use to building administrators.



Example of ground floor installation plan for BOA Vista Tower

Using Federal CARES Act funds, NBHA purchased and installed its UV Angel Clean Air™ units in Boa Vista Towers with the option to purchase additional units for other sites. The units were installed on several floors of the Boa Vista Tower's high-rise building in areas where people gather, i.e., hallways, elevator lobbies, staff office areas, conference rooms, laundry room, and stairwell landings.



BOA Vista Towers office space installation



Depiction of UV Angel Clean Air™ Airflow

The Omicron variant is now the dominant coronavirus strain in the US, accounting for over 73% of new coronavirus cases less than three weeks after the first case was reported according to CDC estimates. Omicron is even more prevalent in certain parts of the country, making up over 95% of the circulating virus in parts of the Northwest and Southeast. We may be heading for the perfect storm that will pose a challenge for business administrators. We have a rapidly transmitting virus coinciding with a time when a lot of us are spending time indoors because of the cold and holiday seasons. This new variant has thrown a curveball at the worst possible time.

In the arsenal of infection prevention, ultraviolet lights are used throughout health care and other environments to neutralize viruses on surfaces, in water, and in the air. The New Bedford Housing Authority joins UV Angel's growing list of partners in commercial buildings, medical practices, schools, V.A. Hospitals, and other markets, in the fight to mitigate the impacts of COVID today and adds another important prevention layer for the unknown potential problems in the future. UV Angel Clean Air™ is one more step in the cleansing process NBHA is undertaking to keep residents safe.