

Three Spaces in One at the IRET Corporate Plaza

Investors Real Estate Trust (IRET) is a self-advised equity real estate investment trust that was founded in 1970 and headquartered in Minot, North Dakota. Its business consists of owning and operating income-producing multi-family residential and commercial properties located primarily in the upper Midwest states of North Dakota and Minnesota.

So when IRET leadership was ready to build a new Corporate Headquarters in Minot, they knew what they wanted - a mixed use building that would produce income along with house their headquarters.

The resulting \$17 million new IRET Corporate Plaza is one of the most unique, mixed use buildings in the state. Part of the reason is the sheer size of the facility - the three-story building is 215,000 square feet and includes:

- 74 upscale apartment units, which take up the top two floors of the building,
- 16 retail spaces, located on the main level,



The new IRET Corporate Plaza includes residential apartments on the top two floors and retail and commercial space on the main level, along with IRET Corporate Headquarters.

- IRET's Corporate Office, which takes up 25,000 square feet of the main level, and
- A parking garage underneath the entire structure for both tenants and employees of the corporate office.

Bergstrom Electric was selected as the electrical contractor and started work on the project in January of 2008.

"The electrical system for this project was huge," remembers Steve Wasvick, Bergstrom's Project Manager on the job. "And complex - we had residential and commercial spaces as well as their high-end Corporate headquarters, which included the largest data room we've ever wired.

They've got security cameras on every building they manage. Now they can go online and view any of their cameras anywhere."

In addition to the size and complexity of the project, IRET added another wrinkle - they wanted the entire building heated with geothermal heat. Every residential unit has its own heat pump, a very unusual feature, especially for this area of

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the country. Bergstrom connected all the pumps, starters, and controls and worked with ETS to program and set up the controls for the pumps.

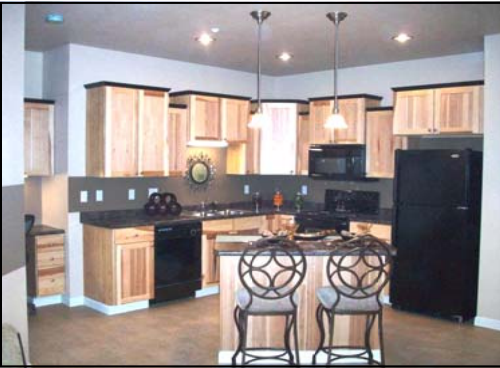
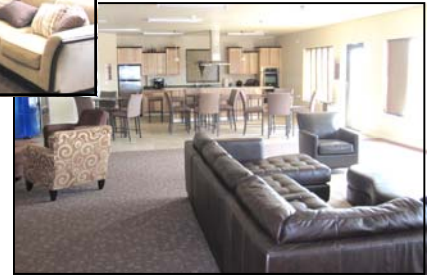
An additional challenge came in the form of the 25,000 IRET Corporate Office, which was not designed at bid time. Bergstrom worked closely with the electrical engineer and the owner's representative to design that space, while the rest of the building was under

construction, earning praise from the contractors and owner.

"Steve Wasvick and Foreman Terry Olson did an outstanding job of keeping this project on schedule. They worked with the electrical engineer and owner to value engineer and then redesign significant parts of the job, and they made sure the crews had the resources they needed to get the job done," noted Jason Gunderson, Vice President of Terra Pacific Midwest, Inc. - the General Contractor on the job.

On January 1, 2009, the residential apartments on the top two floors were completed and certified for occupancy while construction continued on the lower levels. (IRET had 16 residential tenants ready to move in on that date.)

On April 24th, IRET'S corporate offices moved from their downtown Minot



The picture above is of a typical Kitchen. The pictures above right are of the Lobby, Community Room and the Outdoor Patio.

location into the new corporate plaza. The entire project was substantially complete by June 1, 2009. It took Bergstrom Electric a total of 18,651 manhours to complete the job. The total electrical construction cost was \$2,176,700.◇

Spotlight on: Dale Hagen



Originally from Winger, MN, Dale Hagen has been involved in the electrical trade for 24 years and has been with Bergstrom Electric for 4 years as a project manager. He and his wife Bernadine, who works at Helzberg Diamonds, have been married for 19 years.

What are some of the projects you are currently working on?

I am currently working on Simonson's Gas Station in Grafton, Aneta Homes, Ideal Aerosmith, and several projects at Altru Health System.

What was your most memorable project or experience at Bergstrom Electric?

That would probably be when we were awarded the GFK Security Upgrade Project. One of the first jobs that I had estimated for Bergstrom.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I really enjoy working with the customer and developing an honest working relationship.

Did you or do you have a mentor or person that inspired you?

My dad - he taught me to work hard and be honest.

If you couldn't do your current job, what would you do instead?

I would like to give farming a try.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy working on old cars and tractors. Currently I'm working on a 1956 John-Deere model 70 that was given to me by my mother-in-law. I have completely disassembled, stripped and repainted it and am in the process of reassembly. I also enjoy riding

my Road King Harley Davidson motorcycle.

What would be your dream vacation?

A month in Hawaii.

What do you like on your pizza?

All meat with mushrooms, onions, and olives.

What's your favorite TV show?

Two & a Half Men.

Who's your favorite superhero?

Batman. ◇

Bergstrom Improves National Security with ND RPMs

When you drive up to a Border Station at the Canadian border, you may barely notice the large innocuous yellow pillars as you drive past them. But they notice you. More precisely, they scan you . . . and your vehicle.

out of Texas (who officially holds the contract with the federal government), Bergstrom coordinated all the construction work for the ND projects, subcontracting the concrete work out to ICS and performing all of the electrical work and controls.

"We were responsible for everything—the street work, signage and electrical controls, noted Vern Thingvold, Bergstrom's Project Manager.

The total construction cost for the project was \$506,000 with the bulk of that - \$404,210 - being electrical cost. Details of the electrical system are

not available, as this was a national security project, however, Bergstrom employees can attest that the system is very powerful.

"They can detect even small amounts of radiation used for medical purposes," explained Thingvold. "The Port Manager at one of the stations was getting radiation therapy to treat her cancer. As soon as she pulled up, the alarms went nuts. She couldn't go to work for 10 days until it wore off."

Bergstrom started work on the project in June of 2008 and it was



Those yellow posts are actually Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs) and they are located at various border stations along the US and Canadian border. The RPMs detect radioactive material in vehicles as they drive past and are an important part of the nation's security system.

Bergstrom Electric was contracted to install the systems at three different border stations in North Dakota: Neche (1 system), Walhalla (2), and Dunseith (3). Working with MCC Construction

Photos Above: The installation of RPMs at various border stations in Minnesota.

Below: The map below notes the location of the ND RPM installations—at the Dunseith, Walhalla, and Neche Border Stations.

substantially complete in October of that year. Final painting was finished up in the spring of 2009. It took Bergstrom crews approximately 1,340 man-hours to complete the work at all of the stations.

Bergstrom had previously installed RPMs at the Pembina and Portal, North Dakota Border Stations and several Minnesota Border Stations as well, helping improve our nation's security, at least in this part of the country. ◇

Canada

Neche

Dunseith ●

Walhalla ●

Minot ○

● Grand Forks

North Dakota

Cliff Notes



On January 14, 2010, the Associated Builders & Contractors,

held its "Excellence in Construction Awards Banquet" at the Metropolitan Ballroom in Golden Valley, Minnesota.

Bergstrom Electric was the recipient of the "Eagle Award" for the IRET Corporate Plaza project—The cover story of this newsletter. The award was received by Steve Wasvick, Project Manager and myself during the banquet.

"The event was a huge success with over 180 people in attendance. Eighteen separate awards were handed to the very best contractors in our Industry including Bergstrom Electric", as quoted by Robert Heise, President of Minnesota ABC.

Safety was also recognized at the banquet with the receipt of the 2009 Gold S.T.E.P.

award in recognition to the commitment to safety in the workplace.



The "Eagle Award"



The Independent Electrical Contractors of the Dakota's, will

hold their annual "Business Days Convention" this year in Pierre, SD at the Ramkota Inn, on April 8th, 9th and 10th, 2010.

Training

Apprentices have begun their second semester in IEC Classes. In addition, Journeymen/Foremen training classes are being held for all employees to attend one night a week over four weeks this winter with topics such as: National Electrical Code, Rockwell/Allen-Bradley training, Simplex Fire Alarm Systems, and various other topics of discussion made up of employee panels.

Thanks to all of our training organizers, presenters and suppliers that help make our training classes a success. ◇

- Cliff Moen, President



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