embue™

Whaler's Place improves operational efficiency and resident comfort with Embue

"I can see exactly what's going on in a unit by looking at the Embue Super app and can take care of most complaints remotely from my phone."

–Keith Abdow, Maintenance Supervisor, Whaler's Place

WinnCompanies

About Whaler's Place
- Senior affordable housing
- 75 units
- Owned and managed by WinnCompanies

Issues
- Outdated standard thermostats
- Difficulty controlling unit temperature with fan coil units
- Wasted energy
- Amount of time staff spent chasing down comfort calls

Goals with Embue
- Improve energy efficiency
- Carbon reduction
- Better thermostatic control
- Increase resident comfort
- Give staff more insight into and control of building performance

What's Installed
- Smart, networked thermostats
- Remote temperature and humidity sensors
- Whole building hydronic heating/cooling water loop temperature
- Domestic hot water supply temperature monitoring
- Boiler detailed monitoring

Results
- More accurate and consistent thermostatic control
- Improved staff efficiency through remote control, management and alerts make staff efficient
- Improved resident comfort
- Improved energy efficiency

Whaler's Place is a two-story, 75-unit senior affordable housing property in New Bedford, Mass. owned and managed by WinnCompanies. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Whaler's Place installed Embue and instantly turned the building into a smart building that improved energy efficiency, reduced carbon emissions and provided residents with a more comfortable living environment – all while making the site team more efficient.

Embue modernized an old building with existing thermostats and fan coil units

Before installing Embue, Whaler's Place had struggled with inconsistent temperatures in apartment units and its site team spent hours each week attending to resident comfort calls.

The building had outdated thermostats located directly on fan coil units that were mounted next to a window. Because of this, the thermostat showed a temperature that could be 10°F lower or higher than the true temperature in the apartment. Whaler's Place installed Embue, putting smart thermostats in each unit coupled with sensors that detect and report the true temperature across the unit, and implemented flexible setpoint limits that can be set remotely, with schedules that can be implemented on a property-wide or per apartment basis. The result has been a more energy efficient building and a more comfortable environment for residents.

Maintenance staff's lives made easier, resident comfort improved

Keith Abdow, maintenance supervisor for Whaler's Place said that as a senior affordable housing building, his first priority is to ensure that residents are happy and have a healthy environment, but that also meant lots of "high touch" interactions with them.

"We used to get a lot of comfort calls from residents but the only way we could tell what was going on in the unit was to actually visit, which wasted a lot of time and wasn't always convenient, especially after hours. "I can see exactly what's going on in a unit by looking at the Embue Super app and take care of most complaints remotely from my phone," so trouble-shooting is easy," he said. "For example, if a resident mistakenly switches the thermostat to Celcius instead of Fahrenheit, or if they have it in the wrong mode, I can take care of that from my phone all through Embue."
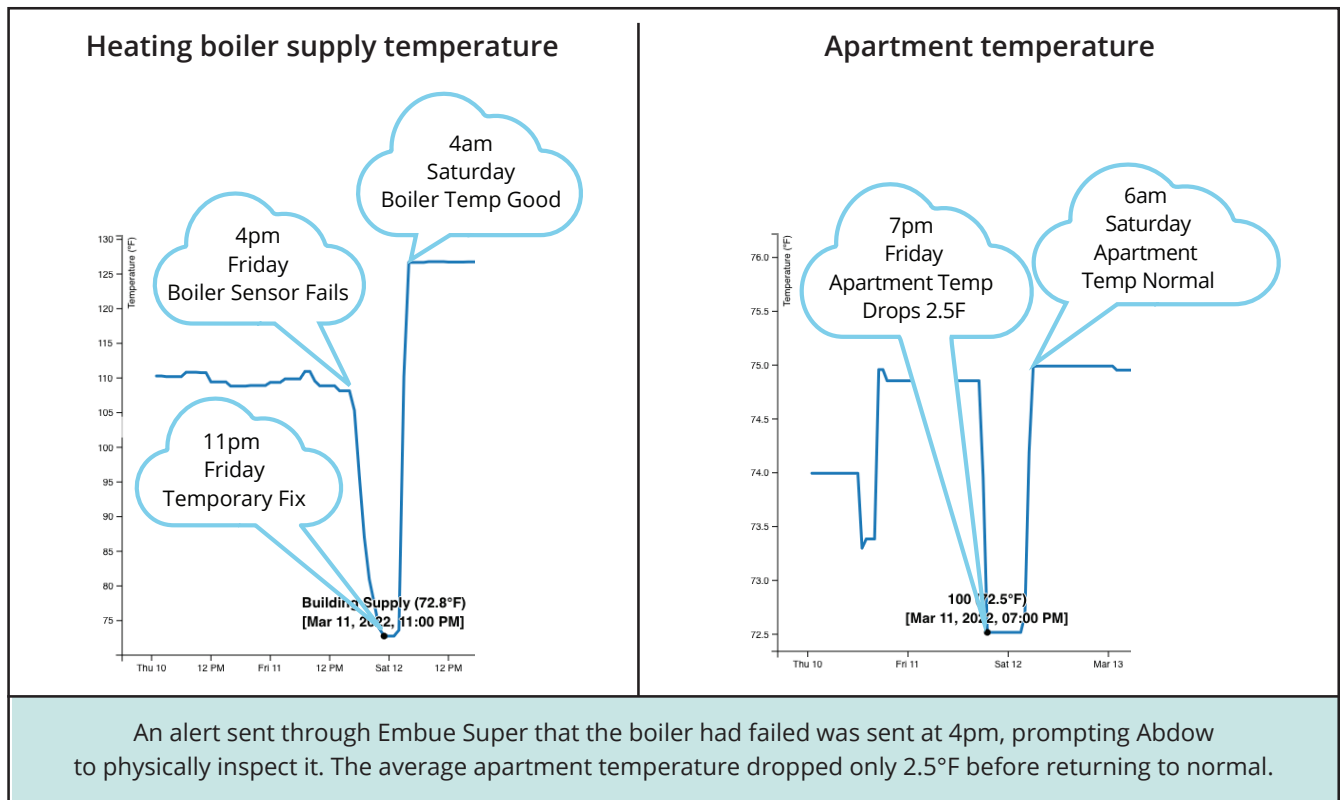
Embue Super puts real-time building information, monitoring and control in the palm of your hand

Embue Super, Embue's building-wide smart building platform, provides Whaler's Place with real time building information, monitoring and control of key building elements, such as thermostats and central equipment including its three boilers.

"Our boilers are monitored so if the temperature goes down ten to fifteen degrees, an alert is sent to me via Embue Super. I can then investigate to determine whether there's an issue before it becomes a bigger one and starts to effect residents," he said.

Abdow said that recently a boiler stopped working on a weekend night and he learned about it through an alert sent to Embue Super. As it turned out, an outside thermocouple had failed but he was able to repair it temporarily until a new one could be installed and before residents even knew there was a problem.

Here's an inside look at the issue and how Embue's alerts helped to identify the problem early and before residents were affected.

An alert sent through Embue Super that the boiler had failed was sent at 4pm, prompting Abdow to physically inspect it. The average apartment temperature dropped only 2.5°F before returning to normal.

"Because Embue alerted us to an issue with the boiler, we were able to diagnose the issue and get it fixed before the temperature in the units was affected," he said.

Reliabilty, Ease of Use, Intuitive Interface, with Tools to Make a Super's Job Easier

Abdow said he finds Embue intuitive and easy to use, with tools that make managing the building easier.

"Embue's bulk configuration tool saves us a lot of time when we switch from heating to cooling and vice versa. We used to constantly get problems when we manually had to switch the system over and also got a lot of calls from residents. Now, we can complete the changeover automatically all at once. The other thing I truly appreciate is its reliability. We haven't had any issue with the system whatsoever - it's very reliable and easy to use," he said.