



Warren E. Burger Federal Building and Courthouse

- 1 Replacing unshielded T12 lamps, high-lumen T8s backlight an acrylic ceiling.
- 2 Dimmable downlights with 90-W, 6,000-hour IR quartz halogen lamps enhance wood panels.
- 3 A fluorescent cove lightens the ceiling and dramatically fills in the wood. 3,000K fluorescents were used throughout.
- 4 In the lobby, sand-blasted, white acrylic panels with 50 percent transmittance diffuse T8 fluorescents.
- 5 The same fluorescent lamps are slotted in the floating ceiling and at its perimeter.

Photos: Don Wong

The verdict? Guilty. The culprit? Outdated lighting at the Warren E. Burger Federal Building and Courthouse in St. Paul, MN. Built in 1966, the 350,000-sq ft building had courtrooms with unlawfully unbalanced illumination from luminous ceilings that under-lighted walnut paneled walls, but over-illuminated the courtroom floor, or “well.” Greg Lecker, Principal Associate of LightSpaces, a division of

Michaud Cooley Erickson, updated the luminous ceiling by balancing brightness ratios and salvaging the historic interior finishes. Louvered ceiling panels now shield fluorescent lamps from view, while quartz halogen downlights and dual-lamp wall washers bring out the richness of wood panels. The renovation not only restored justice to the courtroom, it helped earn the facility a LEED-EB Silver certification with lighting that uses 1.19 watts per sq ft building-wide on average.



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