



For Immediate Release

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Albany Heat Pump Supplier Takes Space in Former Freihofer Baking Co. Building Ahead of Statewide Shift to All-Electric Construction

Lucent Building Supply's new showroom advances the \$6.5M transformation of 242 Spruce St. — infusing the Former Freihofer site in the Sheridan Hollow Neighborhood with New commercial energy

ALBANY – New investment continues the transformation of the formerly vacant and blighted Freihofer Baking Co. building at 242 Spruce Street in Albany's Sheridan Hollow neighborhood. Today Lucent Building Supply, the Capital Region's authorized distributor of Midea's full line of heat pump and air conditioning products, celebrated the opening of its new 1,200 sq. ft. showroom on the ground-floor below the building's 38 market-rate apartments which were completed in 2023.

As a stocking distributor, Lucent Building Supply is focused on supplying high-efficiency heat pump equipment manufactured by Midea while providing technical training to contractors, and after-sales services including parts. The showroom will serve as a center for contractor training programs, equipping industry professionals with the necessary expertise for installation and maintenance as statewide electrification efforts accelerate ahead of the new all-electric construction requirements beginning next year.

With the opening of the showroom Lucent Building Supply is launching a contractor training and certification workshop series. The first training date will be Nov. 12 from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. This will be an opportunity to get tech hands-on training with the products. Those interested should send an email to RSVP by contacting Lucent Building Supply at jrunko@lucentbuildingsupply.com, lunch will be served.

The workshops will support local contractors with proper training as the demand for these systems are expected to increase significantly. The workshops also aim to expand Lucent Building Supply's network of qualified professionals, ensuring customers receive the full performance and energy efficiency benefits of Midea's systems.

New York State's All-Electric Building Act, passed in 2023, requires that most newly constructed buildings under seven stories be powered entirely by electricity starting January 1, 2026 — eliminating fossil fuel systems like natural gas for heating, cooking,



and hot water. The law expands further in 2029 to cover nearly all new buildings statewide, with limited exemptions.

“Lucent Building Supply’s expansion into Sheridan Hollow is a powerful example of how Albany is leading the way in preparing for a cleaner, more resilient future,” said Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan. “This project brings new life to a long-vacant site, supports our local workforce, and helps ensure that our contractors and developers are ready to meet the demands of all-electric construction. It’s the kind of investment that strengthens our neighborhoods and moves our city forward.”

“This showroom opens at a pivotal time for builders, contractors, and developers navigating New York’s shift to all-electric construction. By offering immediate access to high-efficiency systems and hands-on training, we’re aiming to help industry professionals stay ahead of changing customer demands,” said Lucent Building Supply co-owner Patrick Chiou. Thank you to Capitalize Albany and the City for the continued support in bringing new energy to this site and the Sheridan Hollow Neighborhood.”

Founded several years ago as a commercial window supplier, Lucent Building Supply is co-owned by Chiou, a local real estate developer, and James Runko. Their strategic expansion into heat pump distribution—and the launch of this new showroom—comes as New York State accelerates toward its 2050 net-zero carbon emissions goals. The showroom’s product line directly supports the transition to high-efficiency, electrified building systems, advancing statewide decarbonization efforts while reinvesting in a long-vacant commercial space.

The showroom is tailored to HVAC suppliers, homeowners and independent contractors offering a hands-on experience with efficient heating and cooling solutions designed for both residential and commercial applications.

“Lucent Building Supply’s new showroom is helping to build New York State’s all-electric building future,” **said Senator Patricia Fahy (D—Albany)**. “Lowering our carbon footprint while staying on top of changing needs for builders, contractors, and developers underscores how the industry is preparing for the transition to high-efficiency, all-electric buildings. Lucent’s goal to provide not only the products needed, but the technical training to become certified for installations is an investment not just in this vacant commercial space, but in the workers of the Capital Region. Thank you to Lucent Building Supply for investing in Sheridan Hollow and moving us toward New York’s net-zero carbon emissions goal here.”



"Lucent Building Supply's investment in Sheridan Hollow is a powerful example of how we can breathe new life into cherished spaces while preparing for a cleaner, more sustainable future" said NYS Assemblymember Gabriella A. Romero (D, WFP). "This new showroom will not only support New York's transition to all-electric construction and our ambitious climate goals, but it will also provide training and opportunities for local contractors right here in Albany. I am proud to see this kind of innovation and commitment to community happening in the heart of our city."

"Lucent Building Supply's investment in Sheridan Hollow reflects the kind of momentum we're working to build across Albany's neighborhoods. As the needs of new development continue to shift—driven by changing technologies, regulations, and residents' expectations — ideas like this help set the pace," said Capitalize Albany Corporation president Ashley Mohl. "This new showroom brings energy, visibility, and opportunity to a site that's long been ready for its next chapter."

Overall the showroom features a range of electric-powered heating and cooling systems manufactured by Midea. The product line includes outdoor condensers paired with interior wall-mounted mini-split heads, which are increasingly popular in both residential and commercial buildings. New recessed models sit integrated into the ceiling for a more discreet installation. Their 9,000-Btu window unit offers a compact solution for older homes and buildings, hanging perpendicularly on the sill to preserve window functionality while heating or cooling up to 250 square feet. It plugs into a standard three-pronged outlet. The showroom also features compatible electric water heaters.

Midea Group, founded in 1968 is one of the world's largest manufacturers of home appliances and HVAC systems. Operating in over 200 countries, the company specializes in energy-efficient, user-friendly technologies across residential, commercial, and industrial sectors.

The building at 242 Spruce St. was part of the Charles Freihofer Baking Co. Until 1988. In 2023 Chiou and investors completed a gut-renovation of the building which converted and expanded it into 38 market-rate apartments and ground-floor commercial space where the showroom is now open.

The \$6.5 million rehabilitation project was made possible with a grant award from National Grid. Construction financing was provided by Rhinebeck Bank.

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About Capitalize Albany Corporation: A catalyst for economic growth, Capitalize Albany Corporation facilitates transformational development projects, serving as the City of Albany's economic development organization. A registered 501(c) (3) non-profit organization implementing programs and resources to create, retain, and attract business in the City of Albany. www.capitalizealbany.com.

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