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## 'Green tech' lab coming downtown

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Commercial HVAC contractor Monroe Mechanical Inc. in July will open the city's first green technology laboratory in a historic downtown building.

The Monroe firm bought the 9,500-square-foot building at 19 E. Eighth St. in December with plans to restore its 1875 interiors and outfit it with the latest in environmentally friendly mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems. The firm will invest as much as \$1.5 million.

"The whole sustainability movement is not just recycling water bottles, but reusing buildings and making them better," says W.M. "Ez" Housh III, the firm's president.

Called GreenSource Cincinnati, the facility will be open to architects, engineers and developers with interest in installing sustainable systems in their buildings.

The facility will feature a green roof, geothermal heating and cooling, a water reclamation system in the basement, a green data center and a flat-screen monitor that measures the electricity usage of lighting fixtures, appliances and heating and cooling systems.

Eventually, Monroe will add products such as paint, flooring, countertops and interior finishes that meet the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards. Monroe hopes to earn the council's gold designation for new construction.

"Anything that helps to foster the understanding of green mechanical technologies would be fantastic to have," says Chad Edwards, a principal at Emersion Design in Norwood and local USGBC board member.

The building was last owned by Richard "Boop" Rodenberg, whose Ertel Lighting Co. sold fixtures from the storefront for 40 years. Legend has it that the location's original owner was Cincinnati Mayor George C. Johnston, who served from 1873 to 1877. The building has been vacant for the last two years, Housh says.

Housh also plans to open the facility for meetings and seminars by community groups with an interest in green building.

"I really want it to be a resource, an open place," he says. "Not just for someone who is my customer."

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