

“Businesses More Sustainable” by Georgette Frazer

The daily actions of many individuals are moving our community toward a sustainable future. This month, we're highlighting the efforts of some of our local businesses that are conserving resources and promoting a healthier community environment.

Conservation of local water and energy resources is a primary focus for Sustainable Marshfield. We're therefore thankful for the efforts of Marshfield Clinic, Marshfield Utilities and St. Joseph's Hospital. All have received the Green Site designation from the Groundwater Guardian Foundation for their conscientious stewardship of local water resources. You can read more about this program at <http://www.groundwater.org/gg/greensites.html>.

Andy Martin, President of Innovative Machine Specialists (IMS), provided us with two examples of energy-saving projects were recently implemented at his shop. IMS changed its metal halide lights to T8 fluorescents and replaced an old compressor with a new one that has a variable-frequency drive, enabling it to run only at the speed required to supply the shop with the correct air level. "With the rebates from Focus on Energy, our calculations showed a 2-year payback on the cost of the new lights and a 5-year payback on the new compressor," Martin explained.

A local electrical contractor was recently recognized by Focus on Energy (FOE) for its efforts in providing energy-efficient products and services in 2009. The president of the company reported that the projects his firm completed last year as a provider under the FOE rebate program resulted in electrical savings of 135,296 kilowatt-hours, reducing customers' annual energy bills by \$10,824 (based on a cost of \$.08 per kWh.)

Sue and John Twiggs, owners of Karuna Yoga Studio, used eco-friendly materials when constructing their studio space, new in 2008; and they heat it with geothermal energy. "We wanted an environment for our students that was as pure and healthy as possible," said Sue. "At first, the idea seemed daunting but we soon discovered all kinds of resources and support." They found a good partner in local Trudeau Construction, general contractors for the job. "We've hired them for home remodeling projects, too. They've made a commitment to recycle the construction waste," said Sue.

Another local enterprise, Kulp's of Stratford, has added to its staff of professionals an experienced Solar Specialist, John Maggitti. John heads up the part of the company called "Marathon Solar Roofing" which offers amorphous solar photovoltaic film that adheres directly onto roofing panels. The firm installed its first solar roof on an Edgar home in July, 2009. The homeowners are now generating their own electrical power and selling some of it back to the grid.

The Sustainable Marshfield Committee would like to recognize and thank each of these local businesses for their contributions toward a more sustainable community. Does your business have a sustainable story to tell? Please let us know.

Georgette Frazer, a local financial advisor, is a member of the Sustainable Marshfield Committee. Find out more about our committee's activities at:

<http://ci.marshfield.wi.us/administration/sustainable/> .