

Promising Practices



Institutions

The University of Ottawa—Canada's University—a green leader

In November 2010, the University of Ottawa was awarded a cheque for \$136,000 by Hydro Ottawa.¹ The funds were given to the university for its participation in the province-wide Electricity Retrofit Incentive Program (ERIP), a program designed by the Ontario Power Authority to promote the utilization of energy efficient solutions when retrofitting commercial, industrial or institutional facilities.² In this case, the facility in question was the university's Louis-Pasteur 6,000 tonne cooling plant.

million kilowatt hours (kWh). This reduction will result in an annual savings of \$145,000 in electricity costs and a reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by close to 320 tonnes. This has been achieved while increasing the pumping capacity of the facility, by re-configuring key components and installing 17 new variable speed motor and automatic controls.³

The upgraded facility will help meet the growing energy demands of the university as the campus continues to develop and expand.



University of Ottawa receives funds to help reduce emissions. Left to right: Roger Marsh (Chief Conservation Officer, Hydro Ottawa), Allan Rock (President, University of Ottawa), Pierre Lévesque (President, ENERPRO), Rosemarie Leclair (President and Chief Executive Officer, Hydro Ottawa), Pierre de Gagné (Engineer, Energy and Environment, University of Ottawa), and Claudio Brun del Re (Director of Physical Resources Service, University of Ottawa)

The university invested \$735,000 in upgrading the facility and achieved substantial results. The upgraded plant will reduce electricity consumption by 25 per cent. The upgrades will also reduce peak electricity consumption by 544 kilowatts (kW), resulting in an annual reduction of energy consumption by nearly 1.5

The ERIP is a province-wide program that offers financial incentives in order to promote the adoption of energy efficient technologies. The program offers these incentives to industrial, commercial, and institutional customers. The program was initiated in 2009 and was to last for three years. Projects receiving funding must be completed in 12 months after their approval date.

All retrofit projects under the ERIP must be submitted to the local utility for approval; the focus tends to be around the upgrading of



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lighting, motors, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and overall electricity systems.⁴ One of the key benefits of the ERIP is its flexibility. The program is made up of two tracks, a prescriptive track and a custom track. The prescriptive track uses pre-defined technologies with corresponding per-unit measures and involves replacements and upgrades to existing systems. Here, the incentive is based on what new improvements are installed.⁵ On the other hand, the custom track is available when a more specific solution is being utilized. In this situation, all equipment and systems are evaluated on the basis of their improvement. The incentive is based on the specific level of improvement.⁶

“The University of Ottawa has put forward several exceptional environmental initiatives over the past several years, including the upgrade of our power plant,” said Allan Rock, president of the University of Ottawa. “As one of the most environmentally focused universities in the country, we will continue to maintain high environmental standards to benefit every member of our community.”⁷

Rosemarie Leclair, outgoing president and CEO of Hydro Ottawa stated, “The University of Ottawa is adept at identifying and capitalizing on new opportunities for energy conservation, including those offered through Hydro Ottawa. We have recognized the University’s exceptional conservation efforts in the past with our Companies for Conservation award. As an alumna, I take great pride in the University’s tradition of energy conservation leadership in our community. I give its management an A+ for more than three decades devoted to continuously improving its environmental sustainability.”⁸

The improvement of the Louis-Pasteur facility by the University of Ottawa is a promising example of an institution implementing more sustainable practices. It also proves that these energy efficient practices can be lucrative both environmentally and financially.

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References:

¹ University of Ottawa. “University of Ottawa earns top marks for state-of-the-art environmental facility.” Press release. 10 November 2010. www.media.uottawa.ca/mediaroom/news-details_2171.html. Accessed May 2011.

² Hydro Ottawa. “Electricity Retro-fit Incentives Program Brochure.” Website text. www.hydroottawa.com/pdfs/erip_brochure.pdf. Accessed March 2011.

³ Supra note 1.

⁴ Supra note 2.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

