

Case study: Fenelon Cleaners and Solar Laundry



In mid 2007 and with energy prices rising, Keith Finley, owner of Fenelon Cleaners in Fenelon Falls Ontario had a question: could he use solar panels in some way to reduce operating costs?

"The more I researched this, the more it seemed to make sense", says Mr. Finley. 'I realized that this was good business, and, it's green'.

Toronto-based Village Technologies was commissioned to undertake the feasibility study, write the grant application, design the system and manage its installation.

In the summer of 2008, Village Technologies installed a 16 collector system designed specifically for heating water. Connected to a heat exchange unit, the installation will pre-heat the 3,000 litres of hot water used by the laundromat every day. Through the year, 50% of the laundromat's water heating needs will be met by the panels. In doing so, it will offset 9 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂) annually.

Designed to last 20 years with minimal maintenance, the project will pay for itself in an estimated 4-5 years through energy cost savings. Further driving the project's estimated 33% return on investment (ROI) was a government grant rebating 50% of the total project cost.

According to the Coin Laundry Association, fewer than 5% of coin laundries in the US (Canadian figures not available) use solar or renewable energy.

Says Finley, "now there's one more reason for a sunny day to be a great day".

ABOUT VILLAGE TECHNOLOGIES
Located in Toronto's South Riverdale neighbourhood, Village Technologies is a green building design and energy efficiency system integration company.

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