



Retrofit Incentive Program serves up big savings for East Side Mario's: Lighting retrofit will pay for itself in less than 10 months

CASE STUDY

East Side Mario's Project Stats:

- Interior lighting retrofit
- Savings \$8,092 annually
- SBL Incentive \$4,529

PROJECT

Reduce energy consumption by 62,247 kilowatt-hours per year, with annual savings of \$8,092, at East Side Mario's, by installing energy-efficient lighting throughout the restaurant.

BACKGROUND

East Side Mario's is an Italian restaurant located in a one-storey building on Lansdowne Street West in Peterborough. It is part of a chain owned by Prime Restaurants. The local franchise owners are Dianne and Matthew Kraft. The 6,500 square foot restaurant, which is open 14 hours a day, seven days a week, has seating for 200 people.

Like any business owners, the Krafts do what they can to reduce their operating expenses. However, managing their electricity consumption has been a challenge. "We can control our labour and food costs," says Dianne Kraft, "but our hydro costs are fixed, and there's not much we can do about that."

In 2011, the Krafts attended an energy presentation at a conference hosted by Prime Restaurants. There they learned about the RETROFIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM and the potential for savings by improving the energy-efficiency of their facility.

A subsequent energy audit of the restaurant identified interior lighting as a major opportunity for improvement that would lead to a reduction in energy consumption and commensurate electricity bill savings.

As an environmentalist, Dianne Kraft was interested in the opportunity to reduce the restaurant's carbon footprint. But her husband and business partner, Matthew Kraft, was focussed on the bottom line. "The retrofit incentives got his interest," says Ms. Kraft.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Kraft's retained O'Connor's Utility Management Company, of Brampton, to undertake the retrofit. The installation took place in April 2012 and the entire job was completed in one day.

The bulk of the job consisted of replacing all of the 25 Watt incandescent lighting in the dining area with high efficiency 4 Watt LED lamps. The T12 fixtures in the kitchen were upgraded with T8 lamps and ballasts. The exterior entrance lighting and exit lights were also retrofitted. In addition, O'Connor's installed vinyl curtains on the kitchen coolers, and an electronic air curtain at the front entrance, to reduce heat loss.

O'Connor's did all of the work after hours, so there was no disruption to the restaurant or its patrons. The entire process was smooth and seamless, with all necessary paperwork handled by the contractor.

"They really made it easy for us," says Ms. Kraft.



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FINANCING

The total cost of the lighting conversion project at East Side Mario's was \$11,352. The Krafts received \$4,529 in incentives from Peterborough Distribution Inc., under Ontario Power Authority's RETROFIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM. The net cost was \$6,823. O'Connor's helped the Krafts by providing financing options. With annual projected savings of \$8,092, the project will pay for itself in an amazing 10 months.

RESULTS

The projected annual bill savings from reduced electricity consumption is \$8,092, which will result in a pay-back of less than one year. However, the Krafts are already seeing improvements that are far exceeding the original projections – in the first six months since the upgrade there has been a 36% decrease in the restaurant's electricity consumption and bill savings of \$7,385. This is due, in part, to the savings in air conditioning costs resulting from the new lights which give off less heat than the old lamps.

The environment is also benefitting – the yearly reduction in electricity consumption of 62,247 kilowatt-hours will result in annual greenhouse gas savings of more than ten tonnes.

The quality of the restaurant's lighting was not affected. “Lighting is important in a restaurant. It creates ambience, but it has to be bright enough for patrons to read their menus,” said Ms. Kraft, “Our customers didn't notice any difference in the lighting.”

And Ms. Kraft notes that the new lights last longer and don't blow out as often as the old ones. This will provide additional savings over time.

LESSONS LEARNED

Ms. Kraft pointed out that lighting costs are an expense which restaurant owners might accept as cost of doing business. But the RETROFIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM offers the financial assistance to maintain or improve the quality of lighting while saving money.

And the RETROFIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM is great for business owners who want to reduce their environmental impact. “As a business, it's often difficult to be environmentally-friendly, because the infrastructure isn't in place. So, anything we can do to reduce our carbon footprint is welcomed,” says Ms. Kraft, who also does what she can in her personal life to be green.

Dianne Kraft encourages all business owners to consider the RETROFIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.



Her message is simple: “Get on the bus. This is a great way to save money and reduce your carbon footprint as a business owner.”

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