

## **Green Makeover' offers humor, answers**

By Leslie Wright  
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July 2, 2007

Green is a familiar color at Johnson Woolen Mills. The company's green-and-black plaid shirts have been around for so long they're as iconic as maple syrup and Holstein cows here in Vermont.

Green in the environmental sense wasn't so familiar.

"I thought it would cost too much money," said Stacy Manosh, owner of the fourth-generation business that's celebrating its 165th anniversary this year. "It would be hard. It would be difficult. I just had this mental picture of red tape and not being easily achievable."

One of the company's buildings dates to the company's founding in 1842.

Manosh had a call from Daniel Hecht. He was looking for a business willing to go through an environmental assessment for a film he was making on greening-up businesses.

Manosh agreed, and now Johnson Woolen Mills is the centerpiece of a newly released DVD called "The Green Makeover." The DVDs are being sent out to 3,800 businesses in the state this week.

The video was a joint effort by three organizations: Vermont Environmental Consortium, Vermont Small Business Development Center and Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Hecht, executive director of the Vermont Environmental Consortium, wrote the script and is one of the main actors in the video. He also raised the money, \$50,000, to produce the film from nine public, private and non-profit organizations across the state.

The 35-minute video is a hybrid of "This Old House," a home-remodeling show on public television, and an infomercial, with a theme song by Vermont musician Jon Gailmor and cameo appearances by a number of well-known Vermonters including comedian Rusty DeWees, storyteller Willem Lange and Senators Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders.

The idea was to make the material entertaining and informative, said Hecht, who is also a best-selling novelist who writes thrillers.

"It could have been a PowerPoint and it would have been very boring. Being entertaining is part of the message, i.e., it can be fun to do this," Hecht said.

The video also highlights several businesses that have taken steps to increase energy efficiency, including Lake Champlain Chocolates. Lighting in the company's new building in Burlington is featured. Lights in the warehouse turn on only when someone enters an area and a "daylight harvesting" control system allows lights to dim as natural light flows in.

The company saw \$36,000 in annual savings by using energy-efficient lighting, heating and cooling systems. In a business where climate control and air quality (chocolate picks up odors)

are essential, energy efficiency makes sense, said Jim Lampman, president.

"You certainly want to get a return on investment and going green is certainly getting a return on investment," Lampman said.

As for Johnson Woolen Mills, Manosh said the company wound up spending \$12,000 changing lights, adding insulation and making other changes. She opted not to replace a furnace or four air conditioners with a duct system, because of the cost.

Manosh has been pleased with the results. She's saving \$6,000 a year because of the lighting changes and the new lights have improved both the retail store and factory floor.

"The lighting in the store now is just fantastic. We used to have customers say, 'Would you mind if I take this shirt outside so I can see what color it is?'" Manosh said. "Our energy bill has gone down. Our lighting quality has gone up."

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