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Atelier R.A.D.O Inc. Commercial Retrofit Energy Smart Program Winner

Atelier R.A.D.O Inc., founded in 1983, is an Edmundston-based, non-profit organization serving the greater Madawaska region with a food bank, soup kitchen, clothing depot and emergency services for individuals living on or below the poverty line. The rising costs of both energy and food, coupled with an increasing demand for services resulted in a committee dedicated to reducing the non-profit's operating costs.



Four years ago the committee decided to find a new location, looking for a newer, larger and more accessible building to accommodate its older and growing client-base. After relocating the committee decided to perform an energy assessment on the newly acquired building to target retrofits for energy efficiency in order to cut operating costs and free up funds for services and programs.

A testament to the organization's impact and value to the region it serves, the whole community rallied to support Atelier R.A.D.O's retrofits for energy efficiency. When the work began an incredible outpouring of support from the community ensued. "I had individuals coming in twice a week, with offers to help out with their time or financial donations," says Stéphane Bourgoïn, General Director of Atelier R.A.D.O. "It was like something out of a movie."

Atelier R.A.D.O decided to install a geothermal heat pump and a domestic hot water heating system. The non-profit also decided to install a new roof with insulation, air exchanger, new windows and doors, and performed a lighting upgrade.

Stéphane says that he is more than happy about the decision to install a geothermal heat pump. Atelier R.A.D.O now pays a two-thirds the amount of previous power bills, for a space that is three times as big and much more comfortable.

"We weren't freezing this winter, even though it was a really cold winter, and in the summers, it will be cool thanks to the natural cooling of the geothermal pump," says Stéphane, who has heard a lot of positive feedback from clients about the building's comfort.

"And, with geothermal, we aren't subjected to fluctuating costs of energy; we aren't stuck wondering about oil prices and the cost of heating" says Stéphane.

Atelier R.A.D.O received funds from Human Resources & Skills Development Canada and incentives from Efficiency NB through the Energy Smart program for commercial buildings. "We also got incredible support from the staff at Efficiency NB, they were great at explaining how things needed to be done," says Stéphane.



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“Our programs are designed to reduce the likelihood of a person becoming homeless-- studies show that if you can eat well, you are less likely to end up on the streets,” says Stéphane. And with an estimated \$10,487 of energy savings each year, Atelier R.A.D.O will be better able to fund programs and meet the needs of their clients in a comfortable and accessible building.



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