

The Newport Daily Express

Orleans County's Daily Newspaper



GOOD MORNING

Today...Cloudy, chance of showers a.m. Sunny in the afternoon p.m. Highs in the upper 70s.
Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 60s.

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NEWPORT, VERMONT

PRICE 50c

Columbia Forest to save \$50,000 in energy costs

In the world of energy efficiency, smaller is better. Columbia Forest Products, of Newport, one of the largest producers of hardwood veneer in North America, is saving almost \$55,000 annually in energy costs after switching to smaller, more energy-efficient air compressors.

"We've satisfied all our mill needs and exceeded our expectations for energy savings," said Aaryn French, plant engineer at Columbia Forest. "With utility prices on the rise, energy efficiency is more important than ever to our company."

When one of Columbia Forest's two main air compressors failed, French sought the advice of Lenny Mongeon at Air Compressor Engineering in Hinesburg, VT. Together they decided to contact Efficiency Vermont, the statewide energy efficiency utility, to conduct an energy use assessment of the factory and determine what

size compressors would be most appropriate for the factory.

"Efficiency Vermont helped Columbia Forest find a number of air leaks that were really putting a drain on the equipment," Mongeon said. "By minimizing these leaks, we were able to replace the old compressors with smaller, more efficient models."

Columbia Forest decided to take a unique approach to their air supply needs by purchasing two different compressors: a 125 horsepower (hp) unit and a smaller 40 hp machine. The 40 hp model runs only for those jobs with the highest pressure needs, thereby maximizing the efficiency of the 125 hp compressor by allowing it to run at a constant output. Both compressors are equipped with variable speed control to ensure that the right amount of air is delivered where it is most needed. Mongeon notes that the changes have also resulted in improved

air quality and quieter operation.

"Together, all the partners concluded that we could reduce energy needs considerably by combining simple repairs with more intelligent equipment," said Darrell Marley, project manager at Efficiency Vermont.

The statewide energy efficiency utility provided a significant rebate, which will help Columbia Forest cover the costs of the energy-efficient upgrades. Columbia Forest's upgrades will save approximately 690,000 kilowatt-hours annually, which as French notes, benefits the entire state of

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Energy

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Vermont by reducing the strain on the state's energy resources.

"We're already planning on making more efficiency improvements," adds French. "I've told everyone around here that I want at least one project going on with Efficiency Vermont at all times, because there's always more we

can be doing to save energy."

Efficiency Vermont was created by the Vermont Legislature and the Vermont Public Service Board to help all Vermonters reduce energy costs, strengthen the economy and protect Vermont's environment. Efficiency Vermont is currently operated by Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC), an independent organiza-

tion under contract to the Vermont Public Service Board. VEIC is a Vermont-based nonprofit organization founded in 1986. For more information, contact Efficiency Vermont at 1-888-921-5990 or visit www.encyvermont.com <<http://www.encyvermont.com>>