Industrial Customer Newsletter

August 2021

Energy Insider

Expert advice to reduce costs

What's included in a complimentary facility walkthrough

Energy Solutions Advisor (ESA) **Michel Doran** serves about 90 large commercial and industrial customers in Hamilton, Brantford and Oakville. Here, he shares how you can benefit from a complimentary facility walkthrough.

Enbridge Gas offers a complimentary facility walkthrough for customers looking to reduce costs and improve operations. Who's eligible?

All industrial customers are entitled to a complimentary site walkthrough to discuss options for energy-efficiency improvements. We know that energy conservation projects can sometimes take a backseat to meeting production targets. We're here to help increase your bandwidth and be a resource for you. We want to add value and provide solutions; we know your time is valuable.

What does the walkthrough include?

As a starting point, before the walkthrough we'll do a natural gas consumption analysis for your facility. We review two or three years of past bills to see how you've used natural gas from season to season and year over year.

Let's say we find you used two times more natural gas this year compared to last year. Is that because some of your equipment has lost efficiency? Is there leakage? Or did production increase? The answer can help us spot ways to find savings for you.

Here's another example: if your usage spikes in winter months, we know that's usually from space heating, and we can have a discussion with you about how to find heating efficiencies. If your natural gas use is 'flat' (the same amount per month), it's likely that most of your use is process heating and there are many technologies available to improve efficiencies in that area.

This consumption analysis gives us a starting direction for the walkthrough.

What happens on site?

Once we get to your site, we look at the size of your operation, the type of process equipment you have, what hours of the day you're operating and any changes that might have affected your natural gas consumption in the past year or two. This gives us a good feel of where you should be, consumption-wise. Based on our work with other customers, we know what's typical or not for certain types of facilities and can tell you where you sit in that range.

How long does the walkthrough take?

We give as much time as needed, but in most cases I can keep my visit to one hour. Half that time I spend touring your site and the other half I spend presenting your energy profile and answering your questions.

What does the presentation cover?

We usually talk about the low-hanging fruit first–the easy changes you can make to save energy most quickly and easily. We also discuss your Environmental, Social and Governance plan if you have one, especially any internal metrics or targets you're trying to meet. Finally, we go over what type of budgets you may have available for energy-efficiency improvements and what financial incentives Enbridge Gas offers to help support upgrades.

Request your complimentary walkthrough by contacting an Energy Solutions Advisor.

Connect with an Energy Solutions Advisor today

Contact an expert

Top 5 benefits of energy curtains

From Leamington to Niagara, Ontario's greenhouse sector continues to grow at a rapid pace–strong consumer demand for local products and innovative solutions that reduce production costs are helping margins increase every year. With an eye on savings, **Haris Ahmadzai**, Supervisor, Energy Conservation, shares the top five benefits of retractable energy curtains.

1. **Keep out cold air**
   In colder months, energy curtains (sometimes referred to as shades, screens or blankets) serve to reduce heat loss at night. Installed horizontally just above the crop, they can be closed during the night and retracted during the day. When closed, there's less volume of air to heat, and the curtain helps reflect heat back onto the crop, protecting plants while lowering heating bills by up to 35 percent.
2. **Made in the shade**
   During the summer, closing curtains during very hot, sunny days helps shield crops that are sensitive to intense light, such as peppers, while still maintaining proper internal temperatures. Shading also helps reduce cooling costs and may improve yields.
3. **Improve humidity control**
   Using curtains in conjunction with roof vents can help quickly balance humidity buildup issues: curtains help provide a physical barrier to prevent cold air from hitting the crop, while vents allow fresh air in.
4. **Reduce temperature fluctuations**
   Temperature control is essential for healthy plants, but it's also important for heating equipment. Drastic swings can cause your boiler to work harder, reducing efficiency and affecting maintenance and lifetime use. Curtains help regulate indoor environments and avoid energy peaks and valleys.
5. **Get dark-sky compliant**
   Some municipalities are implementing bylaws for greenhouse growers that artificially light crops at night. In these areas, installing blackout energy curtains and keeping them closed at night can help you prevent light pollution, save energy and stay compliant. Talk to an Energy Solutions Advisor about available incentives for blackout curtains in your area.

Our greenhouse program provides complimentary services and financial incentives for the assessment and implementation of energy curtains, infrared heaters, insulation, controls and more energy-efficiency measures. Simply contact us to learn more.

Learn how your greenhouse can benefit from incentives and technical expertise

See all incentives

Older steam heat system? Don't miss out on offers to upgrade.

If your greenhouse was built 25 years ago or more, a steam heating system was really your only option. Today, hot water is the most popular method for carrying heat from the boiler to the greenhouse, for several reasons:

1. The temperature of the water circulating in the hot water systems can be controlled by precise zones.
2. Hot water systems can provide more uniform, efficient heat to the crop canopy.
3. A larger reserve of heat is available in hot water systems, as a backup.
4. Steam-based systems can have higher maintenance costs than hot water systems.

If you're still using a steam system for heating, there are two possible approaches for upgrading to hot water or "hydronic" systems to save on energy and costs and lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Option 1: Combined steam and hot water

Adapting your existing steam system to use hot water can be a very cost-effective option: you can keep the steam boiler and tie in a heat exchanger or two to convert the steam to hot water to improve efficiency and reduce energy costs.

Option 2: Steam boiler replacement

While a full steam system replacement is a more extensive installation process, advancements in technology have made this major upgrade more cost-effective in recent years, and the payback is now more attractive to many greenhouse operators. We recommend targeting the summer months to complete a project of this scale.

Enbridge Gas Energy Solutions Advisors can perform an initial assessment of your heating system at no cost to help determine if your facility is a good candidate for a steam to hot water conversion. If a more detailed assessment is needed, we pay up to 50 percent of the cost of a feasibility study (up to a maximum of $10,000), and if you decide to implement the recommendations, we also pay up to 50 percent of project costs.

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Learn more about all incentives

Historical newsletters

- March 2021
- October 2020
- July 2020