

## Small Business Energy Advantage

### **UI Program Serves Shelton Restaurant A Large Helping of Energy Savings**

“There are only so many ways you can save money these days,” restaurateur Gary Lavin said. “UI’s Small Business Energy Advantage program did it for us by reducing our energy consumption.”

Lavin is co-owner of the Duchess Restaurant in Shelton, which is open 17 hours a day—6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. In October 2002, the restaurant hired Nxegen, Inc. of Middletown, a UI-approved vendor, to retrofit its inside and outside lighting and install an energy management system on its walk-in cooler/freezer unit.

“After a free energy audit to spot areas of opportunity for energy savings, we installed a state-of-the-art refrigeration control system to save energy by operating the walk-in cooler/freezer’s compressor and evaporator fans only when needed to regulate and maintain the temperature, instead of running them 24 hours a day,” said Gary Lane, Nxegen’s Vice President for Sales and Marketing. “We also replaced all the interior and outdoor lighting with energy efficient lighting.”

“These two energy-saving improvements, after having been in place for over a year, have significantly reduced the restaurant’s electricity consumption,” said UI Program Administrator Dennis O’Connor. “The refrigeration controls cut annual energy use by 40,093 kWh; the lighting retrofit by 6,367 kWh.”

“For us that meant combined yearly savings on our electric bill of \$4,435, Alvin said.

And that’s not all. “Total costs to Duchess were \$14,881--\$10,135 for the lighting and \$4,746 for the walk-in cooler/freezer,” Lane said. “But,” O’Connor added, “that was offset by \$6,283 in incentives paid under this program--\$3,910 for lighting and \$2,373 for the refrigeration energy management system.”

“Plus, while we’re getting a quick return on investment, we’re repaying the outstanding balance with a zero finance loan from UI, with the scheduled principal payments shown on our monthly bill,” Alvin said. “It’s a terrific program for small businesses like us.”

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