



Building an Environmentally Responsible Clinic for our Patients and the Environment

When building the Centre for Natural Medicine we asked ourselves two important questions. The first was how can we serve our patient's medical needs. The second was how do we build an environmentally responsible building. With respect to our patient's needs we had to be able to accommodate a space suited to those that struggle with chemical sensitivities. In construction terms, this translates into many features including special ecologically friendly paints and carpets with minimum off-gassing. Perfumes and colognes are not allowed in the clinic. To minimize allergies shoes are taken off at the front door and clean slippers are provided. The lower level of the clinic has been dedicated to some advanced detoxification strategies complete with a far infrared sauna and a colon hydrotherapy program conducted by registered nurses.

As for building an environmentally responsible building we were able to incorporate a number of new eco-friendly technologies. One of the main features of an eco-friendly building is its ability to minimize its energy consumption. With energy conservation in mind, two geothermal heat pumps were installed to heat and cool the building. For those not familiar with geothermal technology this means that the water running in an aquifer 60 feet below the CFNM is pumped to the surface, put through a heat exchanger, and used to either heat (in the winter), or cool (in the summer) the building. Geothermal heating and cooling means that no natural gas is needed for this building and that the electrical power requirements can be significantly reduced. The lights in the CFNM use "power smart" short compact fluorescent bulbs. Attention has been especially paid to adequate natural lighting. The washer and dryer on site are energy efficient. Insulated forms were used to pour the concrete foundation to minimize heat loss through the basement and even the concrete slab is insulated. The attic has additional insulation exceeding code to minimize the total energy imprint of the clinic. A glass vestibule at the front entrance minimizes the needless air loss each time the front door is opened in the winter. As a further energy saving mechanism, fresh air being brought into the building is preheated in an air to air heat exchanger.

Showers and changing facilities have been provided for all staff at the CFNM to encourage biking, walking, or jogging to the clinic. In this years Manitoba Marathon there were 3 entries from the clinic and a special congratulations should again be given to Dr. Dean Schrader who qualified for and ran the 2007 Boston Marathon.