

# on the job

## with Greenside Electric

Incorporating renewable technologies with energy efficient strategies while ensuring safety is at the forefront

Realizing his dream of living in Muskoka, Don Taylor relocated and started Lakeside Electric in 2005, the company was based in Don's home office. Don has been a master electrician since 1960.

In the spring of 2010, Don rebranded the company under the Greenside Electric name and opened up a commercial office in Huntsville, Ontario. Today Greenside Electric employs over 11 full-time licensed electricians, experienced installers and authorized contractors with the Electrical Safety Authority. An active participant in the industry, Greenside Electric is also a member the Ontario Electrical League with Don serving as President of the Muskoka Chapter. Greenside Electric is also accredited as an ACP Approved Contractor.

### Safety First

All Greenside Electric employees participate in quarterly safety meetings to update themselves with the latest in safety regulations. There is also a preventative measures review to increase employee safety. All of the Greenside Electric crew have passed WHMIS, Fall Arrest trainings and Aerial Platform training courses. The entire fleet of work trucks are inspected every month. All employees are issued safety kits with these kits are inspected quarterly. Before a new employee begins working for Greenside Electric, they are taken through an induction checklist to make sure they are up to date with all the latest in on the job safety measures and company protocol.

### Going Green With Solar

More people in Muskoka are choosing alternative power sources as a way of life. Living in Muskoka, especially rural areas, provides the perfect opportunity for residents to go green with their power sources. It's also a lot easier to set up solar panels in remote areas.

The global demand for renewable energy services is increasing as fossil fuels increase in price and concern grows about the economic and environmental impact. Greenside Electric has an innovative approach. Incorporating renewable technologies with energy efficiency strategies, while ensuring safety is at the forefront for any project providing customers with long-term, sustainable solutions.

Don Taylor says, "One needs a different mentality when choosing to go green. Turning off lights and power when you're not using it, as well as purchasing high efficiency lighting and appliances are good ways to ensure your system isn't over-taxed".

"With solar power, it's not like being hooked up to the grid. You can't just use whatever you want," he says. "You have to manage it. You manage your system and manage your batteries, so you don't run out when you need it the most." "Muskoka is the perfect place for solar power as the equipment works more efficiently in the colder temperature than in heat, plus the area has the additional bonus of extra sunshine reflected off the snow. In Muskoka, we put the panels at a higher angle resulting in the snow melting much faster."



### Solar Innovation

Greenside Electric has found they can earn money from a solar panel through the MicroFIT program becoming your own generating station. Don said, "Depending on your roof, depending on your angles, whether you can put it on the ground, you can get a return of 12% on your investment. You also acquire a 20-year contract, which guarantees you that payment for 20 years."

The solar division employs an in-house design engineering department including a solar technologist, solar fabricator and three technicians. Greenside Electric's Peter Ewald echoes this sentiment, using the example of rural areas where a home or cottage owner may need to bring in multiple hydro poles just to get power to their building.

"There's that initial capital investment, which, versus a solar capital investment, that solar might be less," he says. "The other advantage is now you don't have your monthly hydro bill. Also living off-grid is a lot different in cottages and camps where you're not living there, you're there for a weekend or a full week in the summer. Those are very viable and make a lot of sense."

None the less, not all people install solar power for the same reasons. Homeowners continue to sign up for the government's MicroFIT program, where the home or cottage owner can sell back energy made through solar or wind power. The reason for joining the MicroFIT program is a financial one for many, as the government offers a good return on the initial investment.

Greenside Electric is also a Certified Solar Domestic Hot Water Installer with the Canadian Solar Industry Association. The company sells the Enerworks Solar Domestic Hot Water System – designed and manufactured in Ontario, CSA-approved and currently qualifies for a \$2,500 ecoEnergy government rebate. With the Enerworks flat-plate solar collectors, the sun's heat is captured and transferred through an integrated heat exchanger to your water. The relatively simple process has significant economic and environmental benefits.

Greenside Electric also offers generators for standby power or primary power generation – generator systems are your best assurance that, no matter what's happening outside, your power will be there to support your security and quality of life without interruption. Ⓜ

