St.Mary's New Administration Building

Sherbrooke Nova Scotia

Designed by ARCHIBALD & FRASER ARCHITECTS

Certified November 2013

St. Mary's New Administration Building

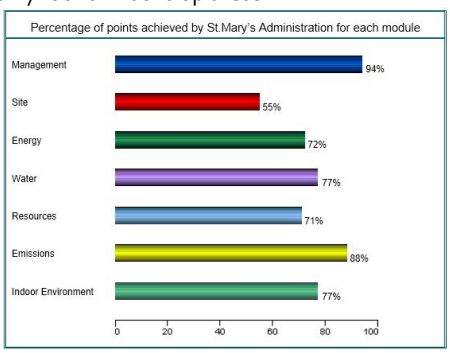
When the community of Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia outgrew their existing administration centre, they decided to pursue Green Globes certification to ensure that their new home would be affordable to operate long term as well as environmentally responsible, healthy and comfortable.

Rather than having propane or heating fuel delivered to the site at considerable expense, the design team decided to install a ground source heat exchanger, which would save money and reduce the environmental burden. Not only would the savings pay for the system, but having achieved the Green Globes certification, the project qualified to benefit from a unique funding opportunity offered by the Nova Scotia and Federal governments, which in effect paid for the entire project. This was the first Green Globes project to obtain such a grant.

Taking a "whole building" approach, all aspects of the structure were taken into consideration, even down to the selection of cleaning products to be used through the life of the building and the training and education to the building occupants.

Local materials, including the lumber, labour and concrete were utilized to reduce the impact of transportation needed to bring them to the site. The Athena life cycle impact calculator was used to determine the global warming potential, carbon accounting and embodied energy of the building, generating a cradle-to-grave life cycle inventory profile for the whole building.

As St. Mary's showed, funding opportunities are available for those willing to make the effort to lead the way to sustainability and researching the financial opportunities can more than make up for any additional upfront cost of going green. Yet even without grants, there is still good reason to build green. The operational savings of sustainable buildings can dramatically dwarf many of the additional upfront costs that may be associated with the construction of better buildings. By implementing green building technologies, occupants can also enjoy the comfort and health benefits of the building, as well as the satisfaction of being responsible environmental stewards. This building will stand the test of time, highlighting the benefits innovative energy systems can have, even if located in a rural setting, away from the resources generally only found in built-up areas.



Project Highlights

- Ground source heat exchanger
- LED lighting systems
- Highly insulated structure
- Open floor plan
- Integrated design process
- High performance glazing
- Use of local and natural materials
- Daylighting and occupancy sensor lighting controls
- Commissioning plan implemented
- Minimized disruption to the site
- Shading of impervious surfaces
- Exterior light trespass minimized
- Building orientation optimized
- Passive ventilation features
- Energy efficient motors
- Water conservation features
- Local and natural vegetation used in landscaping