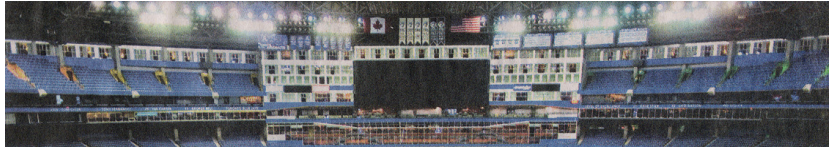


DOME DIET

ROGERS CENTRE RETROFIT TO CUT BLOATED POWER USAGE BY 33%



TORONTO STAR

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SWITCHED ON: Rogers Centre gets state-of-the-art lighting to save power and an initial \$300,000 a year

Energy hog on a diet

Downtown landmark turning into showcase of conservation

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The Rogers Centre, a 55,000-seat concrete monster with an electricity bill exceeding \$3 million annually, is ready to become a poster child for energy conservation in Ontario.

Last week the 18-year-old energy hog, formerly known as SkyDome, flicked the switch on a new automated lighting system that's expected to be about 75 per cent more efficient when complete, resulting in a substantial reduction in greenhouse gases, and up to \$300,000 a year in electricity savings.

"The way this place was built some years ago, it's interesting to note that in some portions of the building the lights burned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year," said Paul Godfrey, president of the Toronto Blue Jays baseball club, which is owned by Rogers Communications Inc.

Not only that, but televisions,

hot water tanks and fridges are typically left on in unused private sky boxes. The heating and cooling systems throughout the stadium, corporate offices and the attached hotel and health club are also huge consumers of electricity, even when the Blue Jays are away on lengthy road trips.

"It's a huge, huge expense," said Godfrey, who has embarked on a three-year mission to cut overall power use at the Toronto landmark by a third - to 21 million kilowatt-hours annually from 32 million kilowatt-hours today.

The savings, worth more than \$1 million a year, would be enough to supply electricity to 1,000 homes for a year.

Rogers purchased SkyDome in late 2004 at the fire-sale price of \$25 million. It originally cost \$600 million to build, about \$360 million of it covered by taxpayers.

Godfrey said that even before Rogers Communications acquired the building, company

founder and chief executive Ted Rogers gave him a mandate to make the stadium more energy efficient, a move supported by Donna Cansfield, who at the time was parliamentary secretary to Ontario Energy Minister Dwight Duncan.

"We assigned a person on staff to do an investigation into what could be done, and we worked very closely with the province," said Godfrey, adding that the most obvious first move was to tackle lighting, which represents 40 per cent of the stadium's electricity use.

"It's the low-hanging fruit."

The company hired to do the retrofit was Markham-based Encelium Technologies Inc., a specialist in automated lighting systems for buildings. CEO Terry Mocherniak said he has just completed the first phase of a three-phase program that counts as one of the largest energy-efficiency projects in the country.

A third of the building has so

far been retrofitted, including office spaces, 161 private sky boxes and the entire parking garage. The second phase will address all concourses, stairways and ramps.

"We're doing about 1,650 fixtures in this installation," said Mocherniak, explaining that various sensors that can detect motion, sound and sunlight are being fixed to light ballasts that allow them to be dimmed or switched on and off from an Internet-connected computer, or programmed to function automatically.

Lights will automatically shut off when nobody is in a room or location, or dim if natural sunlight is providing enough light in a room. The latter feature of balancing artificial and natural light is called "daylight harvesting."

The sound sensors are also important. "If you're sitting still at your desk and the lights go out, you just have to tap your desk and they go back on



CARLOS OSORIO/TORONTO STAR

Ontario Energy Minister Dwight Duncan, left, and Blue Jays president Paul Godfrey, film a promotional spot yesterday on the energy retrofit. The installation of automated lighting, cooling and heating systems will save millions of dollars in energy costs.

Office lights turned on by the tap of a finger

again," explained Godfrey. "It's going to be pretty cool," Mocherniak said. "Our goal is to control all the lighting in the building, with the exception of the stadium lighting," which is based on a different type of technology. "We're talking about close to a megawatt of lighting load in that building." Sky boxes will also be equipped so that televisions, fridges and hot water tanks in the suites are shut off after a game and turned back on a few hours before an event. The opportunity extends beyond pure conservation. Godfrey can now strike a deal with Toronto Hydro that would allow the utility to reduce electricity consumption at the

Rogers Centre during times of peak demand, an action called "load shedding." Through a \$75 million program administered by the

Electric lights will dim automatically if the sun is giving enough illumination

Building Owners and Managers Association of Toronto and funded by the Ontario Power Authority, companies can get \$400 for every kilowatt they can reduce during summer peak hours. The association will also pay five cents per kilowatt-hour for any energy savings achieved during non-peak times.

"The Rogers Centre is a signature building, and to see them taking this role in conservation, that's leadership," said Energy Minister Duncan, who joined Godfrey yesterday at the stadium to record a public-service announcement that will be shown on the jumbo screen during the Blue Jays season opener on April 9. Mocherniak said the first phase cost about \$370,000 and will achieve estimated savings of \$125,000 a year, while the second phase will cost \$500,000 and lead to \$200,000 in annual savings. "We're averaging a three-year pay-

back for the first two phases," he said.

And that excludes the subsidies and incentives coming from the Ontario Power Authority, which could offset Rogers' capital costs by up to 40 per cent.

The entire project will likely cost Rogers' \$3 million before subsidies, said Godfrey, adding that he hopes the stadium will act as a showcase that inspires other building owners to take similar actions. "Everybody should be doing it."