

## **Small business targeted for lower energy consumption**

Monday July 16 2007

By RICHARD VIVIAN, Banner Staff Writer

Armed with incentive options, Reduce The Juice (RTJ) has set its sights on small businesses in its ongoing efforts to decrease Orangeville's energy consumption.

"We have focused quite a bit on the residential and a bit on the larger manufacturers, so small business was the one class of customer we still needed to focus on," comments George Dick, president of Orangeville Hydro. "This is our final year [of previously allocated funding from the Ontario Energy Board]."

Project coordinators Sara Wicks and Phoebe Lusk, both University of Guelph students, will spend the summer visiting small businesses in town to perform free energy audits to identify areas of potential savings. Particular attention will be paid to lighting, Wicks notes, though refrigeration, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and hot water heaters will all be looked at.

"Audits can take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the place," she says.

During visits, RTJ is offering discounted Energy Star lighting produces and, courtesy of Orangeville Hydro, to pay 50 per cent of lighting retrofit costs up to \$1,000. All participants will be automatically entered into a draw to have their entire retrofit project paid for.

"By helping out the local businesses with the initial cost of the retrofit, we hope the RTJ team will be successful once again," says Dick. "Conservation is an important issue right now and we would like to encourage the business community to do everything they can."

### **SAVINGS**

Retrofitting can result in annual savings of 30 to 50 per cent, project coordinators say, noting small businesses account for a quarter of the town's energy consumption.

"We're hoping to visit around 100 [businesses]," Wicks says, adding the downtown core is of particular interest. "They're older buildings," she explains. "We're definitely focusing on it, but that's where more of the smaller businesses are."

Last year, Reduce the Juice visited 5,300 Orangeville residences to promote energy saving efforts. Of those, about 1,000 households pledged to reduce their consumption by at least five per cent.

Businesses interested in receiving a free energy audit can contact Sara Wicks or Phoebe Lusk at 519-943-0303.