

Young's Restaurant chosen as Environmental Champion

Foster's Daily Democrat

Thursday, December 22, 2011

DURHAM — Young's Restaurant and Coffee Shop of Durham announced that it has recently been certified as an Environmental Champion within the New Hampshire Sustainable Lodging & Restaurant Program (NHSLRP) certification program. The Environmental Champion recognition is the highest designation awarded in the program, and is awarded to those lodging and restaurant establishments that have demonstrated the highest level of environmental sustainability commitment, action, and results.



The NHSLRP is a program of the New Hampshire Lodging & Restaurant Association (NHLRA), and the NHSLRP's sustainable lodging and restaurant certification program is a process that helps assess and recognize those hospitality establishments that have taken positive steps to minimize their environmental impact and operate as more sustainable businesses. The program is also intended to help inform, educate, and inspire more hospitality venues to begin the process of greening their operations, and to help travelers and diners interested in choosing more sustainable options find and make use of establishments that are leading the way in terms of increased sustainability.

Young's Restaurant has had a long-time commitment to sustainability, and has taken numerous steps in recent years to reduce its environmental impact, enhance the local community and economy, and become a more sustainable business, including a comprehensive recycling program, use of recycled paper products and compostable takeout utensils and containers, and purchasing roughly 40% of its food products and ingredients from local providers.

Restaurant owner Ken Young said that he wanted to take those efforts to the next level, so, with the help of the RMANH Energy Efficiency Program, the restaurant recently implemented a comprehensive set of energy efficiency steps. Key steps that were taken include converting from propane to less costly, more efficient and cleaner-burning natural gas, converting to more efficient, computer-controlled, on-demand, variable-speed kitchen exhaust fans, converting to more efficient, upgraded compressors, converting interior lighting to LED's, converting several large, poorly functioning windows to an insulated exterior wall, increasing the insulation in attic space over the dining area and around the building's sill plate, sealing various air leaks in walls and ceilings, insulating and repairing damaged ductwork, installing motion-sensor light switches in washrooms and other rooms, sealing gaps around exterior doors, and purchasing wind-powered electricity.

The energy efficiency steps taken are projected to save Young's over \$12,000 per year, and Ken Young estimates full project investment payback to be 4.5 years. In addition, the steps are projected to reduce the restaurant's carbon emissions by nearly 110,000 pounds per year. That is equivalent to taking 9.8 cars off the road for a year, or taking 6.2 average U.S. homes off the grid for a year, or planting 1,279 trees and growing them for 10 years.

All of these actions also combined to help Young's earn the NHSLRP's Environmental Champion designation, the highest certification level awarded within the program. Young said of the recent recognition, "I've often said that I firmly believe that being green and buying local is just the right thing to do, but when you do it right, it is also good business. We've already seen up to 20% electricity savings in the two months since we made the changes, and our customers really appreciate our commitment to sustainability and the local economy. We don't do these things to win awards, but we appreciate recognition like the NHSLRP's Environmental Champion certification, and if it helps us serve as a positive example to other businesses, we're very happy about that."