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## Mack Molding overhauls energy use

By [Bruce Edwards](#) STAFF WRITER

Mack Molding spent nearly a half-million dollars on a major energy efficiency project, installing more than 2,100 lighting fixtures throughout its Vermont manufacturing plants.

The project is one of the 10 largest energy-saving projects undertaken by a company in partnership with Efficiency Vermont — the state's energy efficiency utility.

Mack Molding, a custom plastics molder, implemented upgrades at its plants in Arlington, East Arlington and Cavendish totaling more than 600,000 square feet.

Company spokeswoman Julie Horst said while it's a time of economic uncertainty the \$450,000 investment made sense.

"Amazingly, based on the audit that was conducted there was a tremendous opportunity to save energy, save electricity" Horst said. "Yes, while it's investing money, you have to look to the future."

The company is expected to recapture the return on its investment in two years, with estimated annual savings of \$122,000.

The total estimated energy savings is 1,747,000 kilowatts a year, equal to eliminating 967 tons of CO2 or taking 167 cars off the road.

Based on the average Vermont home using roughly 6,000 kilowatts of electricity annually, the energy saved can provide power to nearly 300 homes.

Lighting Retrofit Services conducted the audit and recommended energy-efficient light sources and other energy-saving measures.

Leigh Winterbottom of Efficiency Vermont said the Mack Molding project was one of the largest projects the state utility has been involved in.

"People are really understanding the value that energy efficiency can bring to their business and that the savings and the return on investment really makes doing these improvements worthwhile," Winterbottom said.

Mack Molding's 100-year-old Cavendish and East Arlington facilities had almost every lighting fixture replaced or retrofitted with the energy-efficient fluorescent technology. The new lighting standardized light levels and also saves energy and maintenance costs.

The more modern Arlington headquarters features ceilings that are 30 feet above the manufacturing floor. The new lighting, some with motion detectors, improved lighting in the warehouse 175 percent. The high-intensity fluorescent lighting also increased light levels throughout the plant and eliminated hot spots and shadows.

In addition to energy and cost savings, the company said lighting upgrades also improved the comfort and safety of employees with lower operating temperatures, resulting in less cooling and ventilation during the summer months.

Mack Molding is a custom plastics molder and manufacturer for companies in the medical, commercial, computer/business equipment, and transportation industries. The company employs 450 people in Vermont with additional facilities in North Carolina, South Carolina and Massachusetts.

[bruce.edwards@rutlandherald.com](mailto:bruce.edwards@rutlandherald.com)

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