

LINKS' Publisher Receives Governor's Award For Environmental Excellence

Adapted (with permission) from an article in Vermont Business Magazine by Susan Lancey, co-owner of Stillwater Graphics



Back row, from left to right, Tim Allard, Paul Campbell, Susan Lancey, Stephanie Gosselin, David Zampieri, Norm Scolaro, Lester Plant, Gary Sheridan. Front row, left to right, John Rhodes, Brent Fuller, Dennis Edwards, Dave Bliven, Greg Lancey, Dana LaPlant, Erica Baker

Stillwater Graphics, Inc. is a small family-owned and operated printing business in Williamstown, Vermont. For the past six years it has been responsible for printing LINKS. Recently Stillwater received the Governor's Award For Environmental Excellence due to their conscientious concern and sound business practices.

The company was founded in 1994 by Greg and Susan Lancey. The Lanceys renovated the woodshed behind their home in Brookfield, purchased some "recycled" printing equipment and began printing for local businesses. Specializing in quality printed products and excellent customer service, Stillwater Graphics began to grow. Word of mouth has been the way about 98% of their prospects became their customers. Each new customer is considered a new member of the family.

Business growth meant moving to a new location – a unique turn of the century grain elevator. With the help of friends, the old building was gradually transformed into office and production space. As the renovation was being planned, the goal was optimal energy efficiency. Three-phase power was available to run their machines more efficiently. A very efficient heating system was installed along with extra insulation and low E insulated windows. Most of their light fixtures are T-8 high efficiency fluorescents. The result has been overall incredible energy efficiency. Stillwater Graphics heats 6000+ square feet of work space with less fuel than some folks use to heat their homes and their power usage is very conservative, even with the large machines they run each day.

The Lanceys had always been avid recyclers and environmentally conscious in their home-based business. They wanted to carry on those same principles in their new commercial setting. Their goal is to provide a healthy work environment, reduce hazardous

waste and institute a manageable recycling program in all the departments at Stillwater Graphics. This was a challenge because printing requires the use of solvents for washing up the presses and chemistry to make the plates in pre-press. After trying quite a few different products, they settled on two press wash solvents that have the least odor and VOC's, but do an excellent job of cleaning up the ink.

Next, they worked with the Vermont Business Environmental Partnership to examine ways they could further improve their environmental practices. As a result of that partnership, a better recycling program evolved. Stillwater Graphics presently recycles paper, cardboard, ink and toner cartridges. They use recycled products in their office as well, including paper towels and trash bags and they encourage their customers to choose post consumer content recycled papers whenever possible.

When it came time to upgrade their pre-press department, two years were spent researching computer to plate systems. Their desire was to install new equipment that required no chemistry and generated no hazardous waste. Finally, in October of 2005 they found a computer to plate system that was affordable, energy efficient and chemistry free.

Stillwater Graphics' new pre-press equipment was more expensive than those requiring chemistry, but they report a great sense of satisfaction in producing beautifully printed materials for their customers while being good stewards of our precious Vermont environment.