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Manufacturer reels-in huge savings from green energy

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Energy costs at Notts-based manufacturer Rapala VMC have dropped by more than £50,000 per year as investment in a solar photovoltaic (PV) energy system means around 25% of its energy now comes from the sun with the remainder coming from renewable sources.

Design and installation of the new energy system, which includes 356 solar panels on the factory and office roofs, was completed by renewable energy experts Geo Green Power. The Geo Green team worked for two weeks behind the scenes to install the solar PV system while Rapala's Cotgrave-based site remained fully operational – the company is one of Europe's largest manufacturers and distributors of fishing bait.

With 50-100% of its total energy generated entirely emissions-free during the summer months, Rapala expects to see a full return on its investment within four years.

Dave Spence, Operations Manager & Sustainability Ambassador: "The installation of Geo Green's solar PV system has given us more independence and control over our energy bills and is another important milestone as we continue to reduce our climate impact. The team here are very supportive and customers like it too – in our reception we broadcast 'live' visuals showing how much energy we're producing from solar and I know some have taken that back to their own workplace."

"We wanted a local, independent supplier to do the work, not least because that helped reduce the environmental impact. We have a system designed specifically to optimise energy production at our site and the Geo Green team did a great job – they were highly professional and completed their work on time and on budget."

Results from its first full year of operation show that the solar PV system is generating 120kW at peak and produces approximately 140,000kWh of electricity annually. It means the Rapala site has reduced its carbon emissions by more than 225 tonnes since the solar PV system started operating, the equivalent of taking 49 cars off the road.

The installation of solar PV is one of a number of sustainability initiatives at Rapala as it aims to become carbon neutral. The company has converted its manufacturing facility and offices to the most efficient LED lighting, timers and sensors; uses recyclable sustainable packaging; uses 100% biodiesel on site; recycles all its on-site waste, sending none to landfill; organic waste goes to an anaerobic digester to produce electricity; an increasingly high percentage of its ingredients are sustainably sourced; and, has plans for the company car fleet to move to hybrid vehicles.

James Cunningham, Managing Director, Geo Green Power: “It’s an absolute pleasure to work with companies like Rapala who are so proactive on environmental issues. Clearly there’s a big cost saving to be made by installing solar PV and we understand when the financial benefits are the main motivation. However, when we do get the chance to support a company with such passion about becoming carbon neutral, and delivering sustainability throughout their business, it makes switching their system on and transitioning them to green energy that little bit more satisfying.

“As energy costs remain high, solar PV continues to make financial sense for a wide number of businesses, and as they explore renewables we’re also seeing a growing interest in heat pumps, battery storage, EV chargers and other products as well.”

Fast growing Geo Green Power announced a record turnover of £12m in 2023 and is on course to grow another 50% this year. The company operates nationwide from its head office in Bradmore, Nottingham, designing and installing solar PV, heat pumps, battery storage systems, electric vehicle charging and other insurance backed renewable energy systems to both commercial and domestic customers.

At any one time the company is carrying out multiple renewable energy infrastructure projects, giving its customers control of their energy needs and supporting their sustainability goals.
www.geogreenpower.com

Photo Credit: Rapala VMC