

Ossining Business Soaks In The Rewards of Solar Energy

Terra Tile & Marble installs solar panels with the aid of nonprofit organization Energize NY.

by Paul Adler



Ossining-based Terra Tile & Marble usually focuses on interiors, providing a range of floor and wall tile as well as accessories and supplies. But with the benefits of solar energy growing each day, the company has recently turned its attention to exteriors—namely, the exterior of its own 30,000-square-foot headquarters, where it recently installed 462 solar panels.

The nonprofit organization [Energize NY](#) aided in arranging financing for the installation as part of a statewide sustainability program. During a September unveiling attended by numerous area politicians and community leaders, Terra Tile & Marble showed off the project's successful completion.

Owner of Terra Tile & Marble, David Gasch, sees the installation as an investment in the community as much as in the company itself. "My father Manuel built this building back in 1993 and we've been a part of the Briarcliff community ever since," says Gasch. "Installing the solar panels was something that we've been thinking of doing for the past five years [since] the amount of electricity we spend just in the showroom building is unbelievable—almost \$3,000 per month."

However, Gasch did not know exactly where to start, or which contractor would be best suited to the task. He luckily received help from a prominent local official. “When the town supervisor, Susanne Donnelly, invited us to hear about the Solarize Ossining-Briarcliff program, which vetted the selected contractors, we felt good about the choice,” recalls Gasch. “When she told us about the new financing plans that Ossining offers through Energize NY, it became a reality.”

Once Gasch saw the potential savings, solar energy seemed like a particularly smart idea. “We studied the numbers and saw that we could finance two-thirds of the cost of the solar system for a period of 10 years, and it would affect our capital flow positively from the beginning,” says Gasch. “We expect that over a year-long period our electricity bills will be about 5 percent of what they are now, so the financing will pay for itself with the savings, and after it is paid off, we expect to get many more years of 'free' electricity.”

When it comes to the installation itself, Gasch notes that the work was surprisingly painless. The installation only took about three weeks. “It was efficient and very unobtrusive,” says Gash. “We would hear occasional footsteps on the roof, but it certainly posed no problems or interruption to our ongoing business during that time.”

Mark Thielking, executive director of Energize NY, similarly notes strong benefits of going solar, including “immediate and long-term operating cost savings, and being a part of something larger—New York State’s transition to a clean energy economy and cleaner air locally.”

“Energize NY’s mission is to help break down the barriers to energy saving solutions for building owners like Terra Tile and Marble,” Thielking adds.

Thielking credits New York State’s property assessed clean energy finance program, PACE Energize NY Finance, with “offering long-term, affordable financing to commercial building owners and nonprofits for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.”

According to Gasch, the savings provided by the panels translate into a brighter future for both Terra Tile & Marble as well as the community at large. “With the long-term savings from our solar installation, we’re planning to hire another employee,” he notes. “Like most businesses, we aim to be responsible members of our local community and producing and using clean energy is part of that.”

Source: The Westchester Magazine.

URL: <http://www.westchestermagazine.com/Blogs/914INC-Incoming/October-2015/Ossining-Terra-Tile-Marble-Soaks-In-The-Rewards-of-Solar-Energy/>