

# Zero-Loc tries to lock out high energy bills

A 37-year-old manufacturing company that has recently doubled in size made itself a new home at Gloucester Industrial Estates this month.

by Angela Wiebe

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As many popular products on the market in North America are merely following in the footsteps of what took Europe by storm years ago, the same can be said for the products of manufacturing company Zero-Loc.

The family company specializes in energy-saving insulated panels and doors that are used in freezers, storage rooms, and more recently, entire buildings.

"More and more buildings are using this paneling," said Zero-Loc president Larry Strand. "Energy is much more expensive in Europe so they've been

using this in conventional buildings for years."

Zero-Loc has been manufacturing its insulation products for the last 37 years, first working out of downtown Vancouver, and then Richmond for the last 35 years.

This month, however, Zero-Loc celebrated its grand opening as the newest addition to Gloucester Industrial Estates.

While the company has steadily grown since its creation in 1969, Strand said business has more than doubled in the last five years, with the trend towards using energy-saving products in construction.

In order to accommodate the rapid expansion, Strand realized Zero-Loc needed to relocate to build a larger manufacturing plant.

Strand said he chose

Aldergrove's Gloucester Industrial Estates to relocate to because of lower costs and because he was familiar with the community.

Growing up in Aldergrove, Strand attended Aldergrove Secondary School and has worked at the business his father created since he was 15 years old.

*"A lot of it has to do with the vision of my father."*

*Larry Strand*

"I worked here during Grade 11 and 12 and summers between semesters while I was at university," he said.

After university, Strand worked in the sales department, moved up to general manager, and three years ago became the company's new president.

While much of the business' growth has occurred while the younger Strand has been in charge, he credits his father for Zero-Loc's success.

"I feel fantastic," he said of the company's recent growth, "but a lot of it has to do with the vision of my father."

Although the company's more steady side of the business is insulated doors and panels for smaller-sized freezers, Strand said the company has been supplying larger companies with panels more recently.

Freybe, which also has a plant at Gloucester Industrial Estates, has its building outfitted with Zero-Loc's panels.

"A refrigerated building takes a tremendous amount of energy to keep it cool," he said. "We need



Foreman Mark Bentley, who has worked for Zero-Loc since 1977, manned the polystyrene insulation machine at the company's brand new manufacturing plant in Aldergrove.

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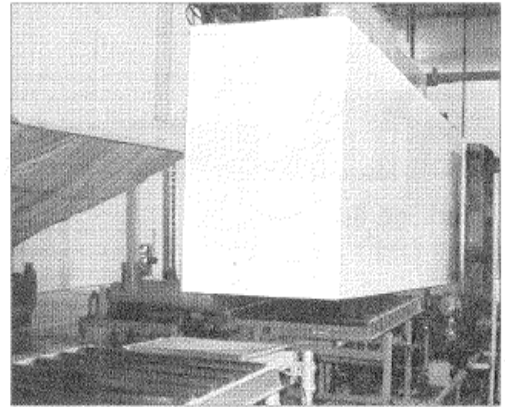
energy efficiency."

He said that while many companies in North America are still using concrete to construct their buildings, they will suffer from much larger energy payments than those that build with insulated paneling.

Some other large clients of Zero-Loc are Sunrise Poultry, Lilydale Poultry, and McCain Foods.

Zero-Loc has also been providing its products to oil production companies in Fort McMurray, Alb. and diamond mining companies in the Northwest Territories.

The company, which employs more than 100 people, also has a manufacturing plant in Brantford, Ont. and sales offices in Kirkland, Wash. and Bolton, Ont.



Angela Wiebe/Langley Advance

The polystyrene insulation used in Zero-Loc's insulated panels is made in big blocks that is then cut into strips.

While Strand stood proud in his new 70,000 square foot plant for Zero-Loc's grand opening celebration on Wednesday, May 10, he expects to have to expand further

within five years.

"Business will probably double again in the next five years," he said. "The trend coming to North America is to be more energy efficient."



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Zero-Loc president Larry Strand showed off his brand-new, state-of-the-art machinery that helps make the company's insulated panels.