



## On top of things: Simon Roofing joins green effort

By Denise Dick (Contact)

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The company has a vegetative roof to improve energy efficiency.

BOARDMAN — It's not easy being green, but representatives at Simon Roofing say it's worth the effort.

Brian Dolansky, the company's environmental director, said company owners James Simon, Alex Simon and Anthony Vross issued a mandate to incorporate sustainability into Simon Roofing's business model.

"Most Fortune 500 companies have corporate sustainability programs and they want to work with other companies who support that sustainability," Dolansky said.

A team of company officials developed an internal corporate sustainability policy.

"We're basically greening Simon," the environmental director said.

To date, those efforts have achieved a 26 percent reduction in kilowatt-energy usage at the company, Dolansky said.

They've also implemented an "in-house recycling program for cardboard, paper, glass, plastic and scrap metals [that has] reduced the waste output by 50 percent," he said.

The company, headquartered on Karago Avenue in the township but with offices throughout the country, also developed one of the nation's few nationwide roof membrane recycling programs. The roof membrane is the PVC material that adheres to the roof.

To date, the company has diverted more than 800,000 pounds of that used material from landfills, and Dolansky expects that amount to increase.

The company also has developed one of the nation's few zero-landfill, reusable roofing membranes made from all-recycled materials.

Jim Petuch, director of Mahoning County's Division of Recycling and Reuse, or the Green Team,

wasn't aware of the specifics of Simon's environmental efforts but was particularly pleased to hear of the use of recycled materials.

"I hope that more construction companies start to use recycled materials," he said. "That's what's going to get more Americans jobs."

There has to be an end user for the recycled products to make them marketable, he added.

Simon's effort is only a few months old, but he said the clients, particularly those with corporate sustainability and green programs of their own, have been receptive.

"Simon also installed a rooftop garden as part of the corporate sustainability program," Dolansky said. "It's called a vegetative roof."

Flowers bloom and plants sprout from the building's roof, providing stormwater management and energy efficiency.

"That's really great," Petuch said, adding that vegetative roofs have been used in Europe for several years but are only recently being installed in the U.S. "The plants absorb water. People worry about a leaky roof; well, the plants take care of that."

The building also boasts a reflective roof designed to improve energy efficiency.

Other initiatives include elimination of most nonrecycled products in the offices, establishment of an ink-cartridge- and toner-recycling program, and integrating sustainable building principles into the design of the company's manufacturing facility.

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