



ENERGY EFFICIENCY: Our Lady of Mount Carmel school has become one of Canada's most energy-efficient schools. Shown here are Joseph Passa, an architect with Passa Associates, and Tim Robins, controller of facility services.

Star photo: Harrison Smith

Greening of a school

Our Lady of Mount Carmel recognized for energy efficiency

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The outside walls of Our Lady of Mount Carmel school may be a pleasant shade of mauve, but the school could hardly be more green.

The recently renovated South Windsor school is one of the most energy-efficient buildings in the country. It was recognized as such by Natural Resources Canada which has presented the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board with a plaque and the architect who designed it a cheque for \$32,000.

"This school is 50-per-cent more energy efficient than provincial building code," said Joe Passa, the architect who designed the new wing of the school and the renovations to the original 1948 building.

It's estimated the school board will save \$500,000 in today's dollars on electricity, natural gas and water over the 25-year lifespan of the building.

The south wall of the building is all glass — fibreglass-framed windows un-

RETROFITS

Homeowners who have purchased the EnerGuide for Houses energy evaluation service and have followed up on its recommendations may be eligible for a federal grant. For details, request a copy of eligibility criteria by calling 1-800-387-2000 toll-free. — Source: oee.nrcan.gc.ca

der a canopy-like roof overhang that lets in all available sunlight but no glare. The light fixtures have sensors that automatically dim the lights on sunny days and shuts them off when no motion is detected in the area.

The heating is in the floor, more energy efficient than radiators normally used in schools.

Passa even considered the building's eventual demise, using a steel roof and studs that can be recycled rather than landfilled when the new wing outlives its usefulness.

As a symbol of the school's environmental friendliness, Passa has de-

signed a rooftop garden on the portion of the building that links the new wing to the old building. It will include maintenance-free grasses and sedums that will act as insulation, reducing the need for heating or air-conditioning, putting oxygen into the environment and eating up smog.

The construction at Our Lady of Mount Carmel cost \$4.3 million, just under the original budget estimates.

"This proves energy efficiency is not more expensive," said Passa. The additional costs come in the design stage, thus the \$32,000 federal grant he is receiving.

The building was the board's first, but certainly not last, foray into "green architecture," said Tim Robins, the board's controller of facility services.

All of the board's current construction projects — St. John de Brebeuf, St. Christopher, St. Anthony, St. Joseph's and St. Anne — will incorporate ideas used at Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

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