

# SIMPCW FIRST NATION

## CREATING A BETTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH BETTER LIGHTING

The Simpcw First Nation, located 10 kilometres north of Barriere, BC, opened the parent-run Neqweyqwelsten School in 1982. Then, it offered only a morning preschool and kindergarten program and occupied a corner of the community gym. Now, it is a year-round, full-day Kindergarten through Grade 7 institution that has educated generations of children in both the standard curriculum and Secwepemc (Shuswap) language and culture. It also forms a vital part of the Band's Community Centre—and now serves as a model of lighting efficiency, too.

### THE CHALLENGE

#### Old lighting that required constant maintenance

"We were starting to have problems with the school's lighting," says Tom Eustache, Infrastructure Manager for the Simpcw First Nation. "We were constantly replacing light bulbs and ballasts—it was getting to be about once a month—because the ballasts were getting old and a lot of the lights have to be on all the time."

### THE SOLUTION

#### Change to new, energy-efficient lighting

In early 2008, Darrell Mounsey, one of BC Hydro's Key Account Managers, gave a presentation to the Chief and Band Council to explain the opportunities for saving energy throughout the Band's facilities, and especially in the school. He also explained how the Band can take advantage of the Power Smart Product Incentive Program to help pay for upgrades to energy-efficient technologies.

"The Band was absolutely enthusiastic," says Tom. "They supported the idea of being more energy efficient, and of course of saving some money too, both on our upfront costs and in the long-term on our energy bills and ongoing maintenance."

"We never actually noticed, until we put the new lights in, how dark it really was in the school. Now it's way brighter and much better for the kids and the teachers."

—Tom Eustache, Infrastructure Manager, Simpcw First Nation

### ENJOYING THEIR SUCCESS

#### Remarkable savings

By replacing 116 old T12 fluorescents with new energy-efficient T8s at the Neqweyqwelsten School, the Simpcw First Nation will save over \$700 a year on their energy bills and ongoing maintenance costs.

#### Improved environment

The teachers at the Neqweyqwelsten School love the new lighting, saying that it makes them feel much more energetic. And if the teachers are more energetic, just imagine how the children feel!

## A CLOSER LOOK

TYPE OF UPGRADE	NUMBER
T12 to T8 fluorescent lamp fixtures	116
SAVINGS	
Electricity saved each year (kilowatt hours)	13,224
Annual savings on bills and maintenance	\$727.32
Value of Power Smart incentives	\$2,900

## THE BENEFITS

### Better light quality, more energy

The lighting retrofit at the Neqweyqwelsten School involved replacing a total of 116 T12 fluorescent light fixtures with new, energy-efficient T8s. Once complete, the results were instantaneous.

"We finished the project in the fall, when it was already getting pretty dark in the afternoons," says Tom Eusatche. "You could see the difference immediately: it was so much brighter. And the teachers told me that they felt much more energetic, especially at the end of the day."

The impact on the Band's energy bills was also immediate. "We have long, dark winters up here," Tom says, "and our energy bills are high. But we've had lower bills since we completed the retrofit, even through the last winter, so this is great for our entire community."

Tom intends to continue working with BC Hydro on other retrofits, including new energy-efficient lighting for the gym and the Band's main office. "Why not," he says, "when BC Hydro is here to help cover the costs? We save money and we do something good for the environment at the same time."

## YOU CAN SAVE TOO

Discover just how much your building or business can benefit from energy-efficient lighting and other technologies—right now and for years to come. Under the Power Smart Product Incentive Program (PIP), products that qualify for incentives that will lower your payback time and make upgrade projects even more attractive include:

- Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs are ideal for areas where lights are left on for long periods, such as hallways, because they use up to 75 per cent less energy than regular light bulbs and can last up to 10 years.
- Energy saver T8 fluorescent tubes. These tubes are 50 per cent more energy efficient than older models and work well in common spaces or meeting areas.
- LED exit signs. LED signs use only 10 per cent of the energy old-fashioned incandescent signs do and last anywhere from 10 to 25 years—which means you will save about \$12 per sign, per year.
- Lighting occupancy sensors. With these sensors, the lights will go on only when someone is in the area, so you stop wasting energy.

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## CONTACT US

For more on how you can benefit from energy-efficient technologies through our Product Incentive Program.

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