

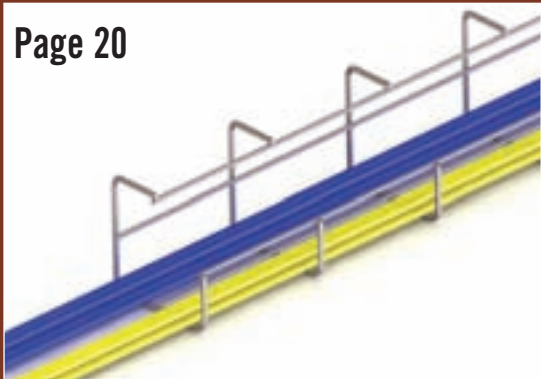
Electrical Business

THE AUTHORITATIVE VOICE OF CANADA'S ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY



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Presenting the latest market offerings in wire and cable.

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Light emitting diodes can provide many advantages over conventional lighting.



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EB tests a simple energy-saving tool: the PowerCost Monitor.



This issue we present a special **Round Table discussion** highlighting the trials, tribulations and successes of manufacturers operating in the Canadian market.

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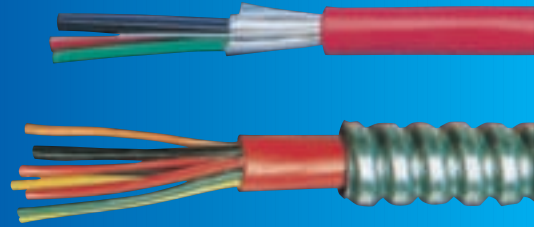
An Electrical Business special report

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INFO NO. 2

A simple tool for reducing energy consumption

Testing Blue Line Innovation's PowerCost Monitor

Back in January 2005, we told you about Blue Line Innovation's PowerCost Monitor: a system that tells residential customers in real-time how much electricity they are consuming. It comprises two parts: a detection unit that is affixed to an existing meter, and a display unit inside the home.

Two years ago when we first wrote about it, Blue Line's vice-president of marketing and business development, Danny Tuff, said, "We know people using real-time monitors reduce their energy bills by 10 to 20 per cent, whereas people using smart meters do not reduce their energy consumption... they merely shift it."

To allay any skepticism, Blue Line sent us our very own PowerCost Monitor to see for ourselves, and here is what we thought...

Where the money goes

To start, my house is heated by a forced air natural gas furnace. Last year at the end of February, my electricity utility asked for \$127.99, where as they only asked for \$77.79 for the same pay period this year. That's roughly 50 bucks (40%) less, which is way more than the 10-20% Blue Line claims I will save. Can the PowerCost monitor be responsible for this amazing drop?

Well, not really. Last winter, my wife and I spent more time in the basement, where we relied entirely on both artificial lighting and heat (space heaters). This winter we've barely seen our basement, and space heaters are simply voracious electricity consumers.

So how does one determine the impact, if any, that this little energy-conscious tool has on the average household in just several months?

Changing mindsets

To answer that, all I have to do is remember the words of Carrie Aloussis, a strategic analyst with Hydro One that I interviewed back in January 2005: "[The PowerCost Monitor's] benefits are derived from the consumer's behaviour." Looking at it from that perspective, I already see a tremendous change in my wife's and mine energy-spending behaviour.

For example, when all electrical equipment in the home is shut down or in sleep mode—and maybe one or two lights are on—our consumption is about \$0.03/hour. When that figure jumps to \$0.17/hour, we ask each other, "What's running?" Invariably, we find something that's been left on, like the coffee maker, that can be turned off.

My wife is also one of those people that like lighting up the whole house, turning on the lights in just about every room so things don't look "gloomy". Her habits have changed, though, since we put up the monitor: now instead of lighting up all three lights in the kitchen, along with the hallway and bathroom lights, she will only turn on the fluorescent fixture that's in the kitchen (avoiding the 100W incandescents) along with one of the low-wattage CFLs in the master bedroom.

Seeing that cost per hour figure rise and fall on the monitor in real-time keeps her conscious of consumption all the time—not just when the bill comes in.

Our conclusion, then, as to whether or not the PowerCost Monitor is a useful tool for helping people reduce energy consumption, is "Yes". It retails for \$149.99, but depending on your utility, you may get it cheaper (maybe even for free). Granted, it will take some time before you realize a return on investment, but if it helps change the behaviour of everyone in your household, then not only will your household be more energy conscious but, when the time comes, the people living there will take that awareness with them into their own households. **EB**



Outdoors: The detection unit is affixed to an existing household electromechanical utility meter with a ring clamp. It tracks energy consumed by counting turns of the meter disk, and is the only component in direct physical contact with the utility's meter.



Indoors: Located inside the home, the display unit shows information gathered wirelessly from outside. Looking at the display from top to bottom, you can see: 1) cost per hour 2) graphic depiction of the spinning meter disk 3) total cost from time of initialization 4) temperature 5) time.

Blue Line wins award for energy-efficient technology

The PowerCost Monitor was recently awarded "Outstanding Energy-Efficient Technology Deployment of the Year" by the U.S.-based Association for Energy Service Professionals (AESP). The award recognizes the deployment of the monitor to 30,000 Hydro One customers in Northern Ontario in 2006—the largest deployment in the world of real-time feedback display devices for tracking single unit residential electricity consumption.

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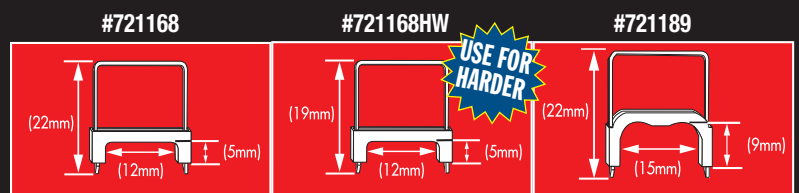


The new ARROW® T72™ makes installing large, non-metallic, sheathed cables so fast and easy, you can do it with one hand. It shoots large insulated staples for 12/2, 14/2, and other cables up to 19/32" (15mm) wide.

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