

# Business heating up for GeoTility Geothermal

By Goody Niosi Writer

KELOWNA - GeoTility Geothermal Installations Corporation has the answer to the one-ton challenge.

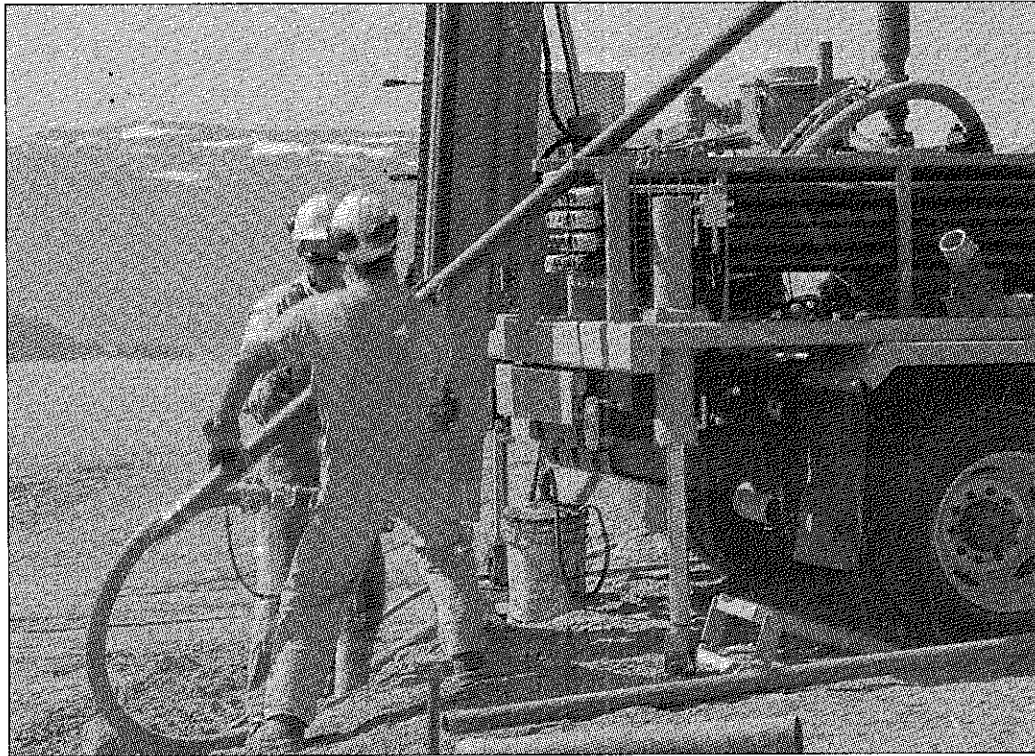
By installing a GeoTility heating and cooling system in a new single family home or retrofitting an old home, the company can help reduce a family's carbon footprint by 3 - 4 tons per year. At the same time, that family will save significantly on heating and cooling costs.

GeoTility Geothermal has been working in the Okanagan Valley for over 20 years. Recently it brought its expertise in the field to Vancouver and to Vancouver Island where it has formed a strategic alliance with West Bay Mechanical in Victoria to bring the same leading edge geothermal technologies to the island.

GeoTility Geothermal is Canada's largest comprehensive geothermal heating and cooling contractor. The company captures low grade heat out of the ground or surface or ground water and utilizes it to provide heating, cooling and hot water with no greenhouse gas emissions and at an operating cost half of what conventional systems cost.

Marketing director Barry Milner says, "It's the environmental choice and it's also the economic choice."

It's not rocket science, he adds. The first geothermal system was registered in Sweden in 1932. Technology has improved but is still the same as the one that provides cooling in refrigerators.



Geotility heating and cooling systems reduce single family home carbon footprint 3-4 tons per year

The company was founded in the Okanagan 30 years ago and for 20 years has been dedicated to geothermal heat exchange technology. Milner notes that in the past few years demand has skyrocketed.

GeoTility Geothermal handles every aspect of the process including full engineering services, a customized drilling fleet, private branded heat pumps, a research and development department and its own utility company called Terra-Source.

Initially the company worked mainly on single family homes. Today GeoTility Geothermal does master planned

communities and high rises as well. Currently the company is engaged to retrofit geothermal systems in the Hotel Georgia in downtown Vancouver and The Hudson in Victoria.

Any home can be fitted or retrofitted with a geothermal system, Milner says.

"The return on investment is very good. Typically the money invested on top of a conventional heating system will bring a 20 - 22 percent return on investment over 25 years."

What's more important, however, is what such a system adds to the real value of the home or building. Milner points out that the Appraisers Institute

recognizes that building performance adds value.

"It's not just granite countertops and hardwood floors," he says. "We are going to go into a phase where people are going to be looking at building performance, much like we do when we buy a car. We're going to look at all the things that make us feel good but at some point we're going to look at how many miles per gallon."

"We need that same mentality focussed toward building performance. The resale is going to be greatly affected."

He adds that many believe that in 10 years, homeowners will not be able to sell their buildings readily without green home technology - and geothermal heat systems are at the forefront of building green.

GeoTility Geothermal had developed a new geofit program, a turnkey retrofit program that will allow owners of single family homes and commercial buildings to take advantage of government grants for increasing the efficiency of their buildings.

In its bid to become a broker

for carbon offset trading, GeoTility Geothermal is looking at installing meters on its heat pumps to determine exactly how much energy heat pumps use relative to other energy demands on the building.

Another new development for GeoTility Geothermal is a new hybrid drilling platform that runs on diesel or electricity with a lower mast which allows the company to install ground heat exchangers in existing buildings like The Hudson in Victoria, or to reduce the interruption of the construction schedule in new high rise tower construction, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars to the developer.

Milner says that GeoTility Geothermal has been looking at expanding to Vancouver Island for some time.

"Our company has invested a lot in our engineering and drilling capabilities," he says. "We see benefits in working with other successful companies within those regions. The opportunity to create a strategic alliance with West Bay Mechanical created capacity and the quality assurance we needed for doing projects on the island."

West Bay Mechanical and GeoTility Geothermal are two large, successful companies, coming together to bring top level service and products to the region, Milner says.

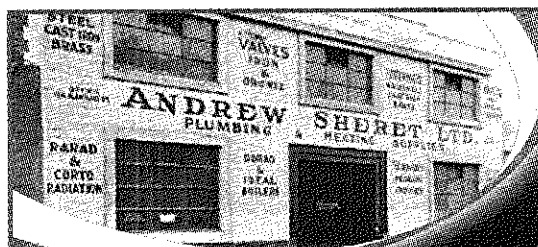
"It's important that we work with contractors like West Bay Mechanical. Ultimately it's a win/win for both of us."

Homes represent nearly 40 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. Milner says that geothermal systems may well be the simplest way to meet and surpass the one ton challenge.

"We achieve phenomenal reductions," he says. "We're delighted to work with West Bay Mechanical to bring what we think is the best product on the market to a community that's ready for it."

GeoTility Geothermal Installations Corp. is at 200 - 1649 Cary Road in Kelowna.

www.geotility.ca



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