

# 2024 Community Credit Union Business Excellence Award

## Kerr Smart Energy Business Excellence Winners



The Community Credit Union Business Excellence Award recognizes a business that has exhibited visionary leadership; achieving growth by introducing new products or ideas, expansion or exportation of goods or services and valuing employees and safety in the workplace.

The business is actively involved in the community through fundraising and partnerships in support of organizations or individuals working to better the community. It establishes partnerships and supports the local business community with leadership while actively looking to the future, focused on long-term results and job creation.

Kerr Smart Energy, has always been a trendsetter and leader in innovation. Through the years, it has turned up the heat to evolve the industry toward energy reduction while still keeping a focus on growing its cozy business here in Truro.

That innovative spirit started with its forward-thinking founder David Kerr Wilson, who at age 20 in 1949, saw new opportunities as people shifted from home heating with coal to fuel.

That same year, David served as the President of the Truro Board of Trade and the Chamber records captured the significant transition in the community.

With a \$1,000 loan from his mother, David laid the foundation of this exceptional company by retrofitting a milk truck, loaded it with essential oil burner supplies, and set the stage of a remarkable journey that has spanned 75 years.

Headquartered in Truro on Crossley Avenue, Kerr Smart Energy has 40 local staff and employs 155 people at its 10 locations across Atlantic Canada and three in Ontario.

Kerr is a leading wholesale distributor of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) materials for residential and commercial markets. This robust and thriving local company has revolutionized the home-heating industry with several pioneering achievements. Kerr was the first authorized oil burner fuel pump-rebuilding depot in Canada and among the first wholesalers to develop and print its own parts catalogues.

The introduction of modern wood-fired furnaces and boilers, in response to the 1976 oil crisis, showcased Kerr's commitment to adapting to evolving industry demands. Entry into the refrigeration business in 1981 exemplified Kerr's commitment to growth and versatility.

Over time, Kerr expanded its product offerings to include heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration systems. The product range has now expanded from oil-fueled units to systems using renewable energy



Steve and Leslie Wilson of Kerr Smart Energy, Community Credit Union representative Crystle Clyde, Sherry Martell, Executive Director Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce are shown following the Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Award presentation. (Contributed)

such as solar power, as well as geothermal heat pumps, among others.

The company prides itself on exceptional customer service which has always been Kerr's guiding principle. Its staff serves as invaluable resources for contractors and dealers, ensuring a seamless experience.

Continuous training and seminars underscore Kerr's unwavering commitment to delivering quality products and customer satisfaction.

Kerr remains a family-owned and operated company, preserving seven generations of family values. Looking ahead to the next 75 years, Kerr is poised to adapt its services to future chal-

lenges, remaining steadfast in its mission to provide the most reliable and efficient product offerings for com-

fort in every home.

With an eye on the future, Kerr recently expanded its footprint in the Truro Industrial Park constructing a new distribution centre, adding 30,000 sq-ft to its existing 50,000 sq-ft facility. This expansion will significantly improve its logistics by increasing inventory.

Along supporting numerous community fundraisers and initiatives, the company also rewards an annual Kerr Family Scholarship.

Tonight, the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce is pleased to honour Kerr Smart Energy with the 2024 Community Credit Union Business Excellence Award.

We ask Steve and Leslie Wilson to come forward to be presented with this award.

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## Materials Recovery Facility Directors Report

The following is Phillip Redden, B.Eng. Director of Solid Waste report to Council on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Material Recovery Facility

#### Staffing:

- Staffing at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) continued to be a top priority during this reporting period. Operations were successful in retaining six candidates into the full-time part-time pool compared to only two from the previous reporting period.

- Two of the recent hires join our team from Councillor Victoria Lomond's Steps on Arthur program and have participated in a modified one day a week schedule with the processing of textile material.

- With the successful filling of the part time pool staffing, all backlog material has been processed and operations are caught up on the inbound recycling material.

- Four employees attended an 11-week Microsoft 365 Course which finished in December and 3 more attended an 11-week Excel course that just ended April 3rd. Both courses were offered to the employees for free through the Province's Workplace Education Initiative.

#### Production and Markets:

- Markets for plastic materials were strong in the first quarter of 2024 but recent trends show a modest retreat heading into Q2. Fiber material was also strong for Q1, with old corrugated cardboard and old newspaper/office paper leading the way and trends show this strong pricing continues into Q2. Staff have negotiated a partnership with GreenFiber Canada's operations in Debert to supply Old Newspaper/Office paper material to produce home insulation.

- December through March production was 2,958 commodity units produced and 3,354 units shipped. Inventory was shipped aggressively in Q1 to take advantage of strong pricing.

- Continue to work with LaFarge in Brookfield with their alternative fuel project with the kiln. Shipped 38 tonne of crushed glass in February for burning as a trial project and meeting in April to progress dialogue for supplying additional MRF residual material.

#### Projects/Operations:

- A MRF residual trailer was modified in March. The modification involved extending the body of the trailer upwards to encase the conveyor belt transferring the MRF residual material into the trailer. This modification has eliminated the situation of high winds blowing material off the conveyor onto the ground.

- Further to outside litter elimination, Option 1. Sparta Manufacturing Inc. was in to evaluate and quote on a processing line modification to keep MRF residual material inside the building. Option 2.

- Working with Public Works engineer on creating a garbage bunker at the end of the bunker row establishing a container line MRF residual bunker. Both options will utilize MRF baling equipment of the residual material. Evaluations are ongoing.

- A vendor supported weeklong demo of an alternate loader option occurred in February which included all operators getting a change to operate the machine. Reviews are still underway, but this loader is viable option for replacement of our current tele-boom which currently operates with high maintenance costs.

### BALEFILL FACILITY

#### Staffing:

- The summer Solid Waste Grounds Maintenance position will return for the season on April 8th.

- The Balefill had 3 employees attended an 11-week Microsoft 365 Course which finished in December and 3 more attended an 11-week Excel course that just ended April 3rd. Both were offered to the employees for free through the Province's Workplace Education Initiative.

- Various staff have also recently participated in updating their 1st Aid, Fall Arrest, WHMIS and Confined Space training.

- The Director and the Manager of Balefill and Compost Operations recently attended a summit put on by Divert NS called Waste and the Climate: A strategic Conversation.

#### Production & Markets:

- The North Wind Turbine is still not operational after a blade fell off in March 2023. Investigations have been underway by the insurance company to determine the cause of the failure and what coverage may be in place so that a decision can be made on how to proceed.

- Molen has given notice that they will no longer be servicing small wind turbines, so staff are currently investigating other local options that may be able to provide turbine maintenance going forward and to help investigate a new issue that has arisen with the South turbine.

- Halifax C&D is currently on site processing our wood and shingle piles. The wood chips are being sent to Port Hawkesbury Paper for fuel and the shingles will be used as intermediate cover in the C&D site.



#### Projects/Operations:

- In December and March, Englobe performed the Winter and Spring environmental monitoring events at the Balefill Facility and reports are forwarded to NSECC for their files as they are received.

- In 2023, Englobe completed the Domestic Well Monitoring Program sampling in the host community and the results have been received after a lengthy delay at the lab. Staff is currently finalizing the letters and result summaries to be mailed out in the coming week to any residents who showed any exceedances in any of the tested parameters. All others will receive a letter stating their results were within the guidelines.

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