

# Orrison Distributing taps \$16K in energy savings

## Lighting upgrade shines

**Cameron M. Burns**  
Clean Energy Economy for the Region

GLENWOOD SPRINGS — Rick Orrison and the other co-owners of Orrison Distributing have cut the company's electricity bills by 44 percent and will be saving more than \$16,000 per year — at the very least — now that they've had a lighting retrofit done in their 39,000-square-foot warehouse facility.

From February through September 2012, the company saved \$16,775 over the exact same period in 2011, "according to my Xcel bills," Orrison said. "It's definitely paying off."

Orrison Distributing, which distributes various brands of beer in the Roaring Fork Valley, was started by Rick's father, Carroll, in Cheyenne, Wyo., in 1955, and expanded to the Roaring Fork Valley in 1965. Rick Orrison and three partners bought out his father in 1987.

Rick Orrison knew about energy efficient lighting but he took action in 2011 when a friend, Rick Broadhurst, founder of R&A Enterprises, told him about lighting rebates available through Xcel Energy and CLEER (Clean Energy Economy for the Region), which runs Garfield Clean Energy's programs.

"Rick told me there were great rebates available if I switch out all my fluorescent T12s and metal halides and get them replaced with LEDs with motion sensors," Orrison said.

When Orrison signed his company up for the Garfield Clean Energy Challenge in 2011, his annual electric usage was 661,040 kilowatt-hours per year, which cost him \$54,959. CLEER and electrical contractor R&A Enterprises worked together to involve Franklin Energy, a subcontractor to Xcel Energy that offers free lighting assessments for commercial customers, to better understand the energy savings potential and associated rebates.

In summer 2011, Ellison Bruce and Ryan Mercer of Franklin Energy conducted several analysis that suggested that Orrison could save 133,443 kilowatt-hours per year — the same amount used by about 19 average homes in a year or about \$10,640 per year in cash-by retrofitting his lights.

Many of Orrison's lights were metal halide lamps, which burn as much as a 1,000 watts apiece. In one of his estimates, Mercer calculated the lighting retrofit could save 116.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year.

In January 2012, Orrison hired R&A Enterprises to replace 73 interior and eight exterior metal halides with LEDs. The 1,000-watt metal halide lamps were replaced with 196-watt LEDs. R&A also added about a dozen occupancy sensors, which turn lights off when there's no one in a room.



Anthony O'Neal, a forklift operator at Orrison Distributing, works under the new energy-efficient lighting array installed at the warehouse south of Glenwood Springs.

Contributed photo

**"Rick told me there were great rebates available if I switch out all my fluorescent T12s and metal halides and get them replaced with LEDs with motion sensors."**

**Rick Orrison**

Altogether, the lighting upgrade cost \$50,021. Xcel allows rebates to be paid directly to the contractor. In this case Xcel paid \$15,102 directly to R&A to help bring down the project cost.

Orrison paid R&A the remaining \$34,919 and then received a rebate for \$5,000 from Garfield Clean Energy, dropping his final out-of-pocket cost to \$29,919. Rob Morey at CLEER helped the business work through the process from start to finish, getting the audit, making the improvements, and getting the rebates from Xcel and Garfield Clean Energy.

In late September 2012, Orrison dug out his old electric bills.

"The result was really quite stunning," he said.

Orrison Distributing's energy savings for the months

from February to September 2012 were an average of 44 percent lower for the entire period.

"And that's just the savings in changing the lights from fluorescents and metal halides to LEDs," he said.

"LEDs (light emitting diodes) are becoming the light of choice for many home and business owners," Morey noted. "They use typically a fifth of the energy of traditional lighting and don't require a warm-up time like some fluorescent lamps.

"While they cost more upfront, the price has decreased significantly in recent years and they have been shown to save more energy, and thus money, than most types of lamps on a life-cycle basis," Morey said.

The other benefit of LED lamps is that they generate a lot less heat, meaning the company doesn't have to run its cooling equipment as much in the summertime, thereby saving even more energy and money.

The new LED lamps aren't quite as bright as the 1,000-watt metal halides lamps he had removed, Orrison said. "But the savings are well worth it. We get enough light in there that we're fine."

Orrison Distributing's cost savings of \$16,775 between February and September 2012 mean Orrison's out-of-pocket costs for lighting will be paid off in less than two years.

"I think it was a good choice," Orrison said. "I have to thank Rick Broadhurst of R&A Enterprises for alerting me to this. It's been good."

For more information on how your business or home can also cut energy costs and tap energy rebates, contact Garfield Clean Energy and CLEER at 704-9200.

## ARTAZ FROM A1

"I was the Butternut weather girl," she said. "I was blessed with something that literally fell in my lap. Over the years, I've been so blessed. I've just been very, very fortunate. I have kind of evolved through radio to television."

### Soothing grieving families

Along with continuing her successful TV career into her 80s, Artaz works part-time for Farnum-Holt Funeral Home in Glenwood Springs. She helps on Saturdays with viewings and visitations, soothing families as they cope with grief. Artaz said after losing her second husband, Souvenir Artaz, 15 years ago, she wanted to help others in difficult times.

"If you're going to do something like that, do it from the heart," she said. "My dad was killed in Korea and my mother died of cancer at 49, so I treat those who come into the funeral home like I remember I was treated when my parents died."

Artaz said it's the little details, things like giving the family hugs and leaving a night-light on overnight for the deceased, that make a difference in the mortuary business.

"What I remember with my mother is that death, it's such an emotional thing. The thing I most remember is the hugs and the kisses on the cheek," she said. "I end up with quite a connection with the families. I just try to hug them,



Christopher Mullen Post Independent

Jeannine Ford Artaz and her dog, Ember, stand on Poplar Jenny's Way, a street named after her in the River Meadows Mobile Home Park.

make a pot of coffee, sit and talk with them."

### Making lemonade

A breast cancer survivor, Artaz understands the need for compassion in life's darkest moments. Along with her parents and two husbands, Artaz lost a twin brother five days after he was born. She also mourns a daughter who died from heart complications as a newborn, and an adult daughter who succumbed to cancer 21

years ago. She keeps a positive attitude about the cycles of life.

"Sometimes, when I feel a little kick in the butt, I'm not sure if it's mother, daddy, or my brother, Vernon," she said. "My mother, she believed that when life gave her lemons, she made lemonade. That's how I was raised."

Artaz finds comfort through support from her many friends in Glenwood Springs, Denver, San Antonio and beyond. She also leans on her 5-year-old canine

**"My dad was killed in Korea and my mother died of cancer at 49, so I treat those who come into the funeral home like I remember I was treated when my parents died."**

**Jeannine Ford Artaz**

companion, Ember, a red and white Boston terrier she adores.

"I say she looks like a piece of cinnamon toast," she said.

Whether its hosting her own cable TV show, helping the community grieve at Farnum-Holt, or announcing the annual Strawberry Days parade for the last 47 years, Artaz keeps busy. She also volunteers with nonprofit groups in Glenwood Springs, sews and designs clothing, draws reads, and enjoys traveling and taking photos.

Artaz even has a Facebook page, where she says she loves living every minute God allows her.

"Trying to stay busy and out of trouble, that's hard," she said. "I'm a survivor, that's all. There's still something else for me to do here."