

Garrison Brewery
1149 Marginal Road
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Introduction

Since 1997, Garrison has been providing Halifax with handcrafted beers brewed locally. Just as the company brews natural draught ales without preservatives, Garrison has taken initiatives to 'Green' its building as well. By preserving the original structure and incorporating local and re-used materials into the building's design, Garrison serves as an example for local businesses who want to 'Go Green!'



Dalhousie Architecture students and mentor Kim Thompson applying natural wall finishes at Garrison Brewery in July 2007.



Embodied Energy

The Garrison Brewing Co. is located in 5500² foot a historic industrial building that was constructed in the 1920s and has been recently renovated. Rather than gutting the place and rebuilding, Garrison used the existing infrastructure and simply exposed the original forms, including the ceiling and trusses. During the 2005 renovation, Garrison captured the embodied energy in the structure instead of unnecessarily using more energy tearing it down and rebuilding.

As you walk in the door one of the first features you notice is the wall of 9-foot high historic windows providing a peak into the brewery. These windows are the original exterior windows that have been incorporated into the interior design, proving that embodied energy can also be aesthetically pleasing.

The building meets Garrison's goal of recognizing Halifax's history as a garrison town while at the same time remaining current with local trends.

Natural Paints and Plasters

With the help of Dalhousie architecture students guided by Kim Thompson, the Garrison Brewery recently applied natural plasters and clay paints to their walls. These natural plasters, which are composed of local sand, clay, water and straw, were mixed on-site in the Garrison parking lot and applied by hand to the existing walls at the brewery. The finishes are completely non-toxic and can even act to improve air quality by absorbing some pollutants. Along with the environmental benefits, these rough walls are reminiscent of industrial buildings of the 1920s and serve as a ‘nod’ to the past of the restored warehouse.



Daylighting

Believe it or not, the Garrison brewery does not use indoor lighting during the day! They receive all of the light they need through the large windows located around the front and the beautiful skylight at the centre. The re-used interior windows also help light pass through the walls into the back rooms. Along with minimizing energy consumption (and costs!), the natural lighting creates a desirable, positive work-environment.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Although staff at Garrison says it is costly to sort and recycle their waste due to pick-up fees in HRM, the company believes it is a necessary process and makes up for the expense in other areas. The company reduces their energy consumption by using natural lighting and ventilation supplied by the windows. The brewing process also creates heat through steam and therefore minimizes heating demands in winter.

“Green the Business”

The staff at Garrison Brewing Co. has adopted some green practices. Along with separating and recycling all of the plastics, cardboard and glass, staff is encouraged to use the Garrison bike to run errands during the work day rather than taking a car; reducing their environmental impact and traffic time! Many staff members also use alternative means of transportation to get to work, including biking, walking and skateboarding.

The brewery asks many of their suppliers to limit the amount of packaging used to transport products as well. In order to support the community, local farmers are given the used grain to feed their animals. This past summer, Garrison also participated in the Seaport Beer festival, which aimed to be plastic and packaging-free.

Future Initiatives

Although Garrison Brewing Co. has already taken some green initiatives they haven't finished yet. They plan to install bike racks along the waterfront side of the building to encourage staff and customers to use sustainable methods of transportation. The brewery also recognizes the potential of solar energy and plans to use solar panels to run exterior lighting and the ventilation system for the exhaust fan.