

Quinpool Towers

2050 Quingate Place

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Henry Andrews



Introduction

Quinpool Towers has 233 apartments, and is home to 600 residents. Quinpool Towers is one of the more sustainable apartment buildings in Halifax. Killiam Properties owns both the apartment building and the commercial space below (currently occupied by Super Store). Since its construction in 1978, Killiam Properties has installed a green roof and 2880² feet of solar panels on the building. Currently the Federal Government is testing Quinpool's potential for a special geothermal energy system.

Green Roof



All 600 residents of Quinpool Towers have access to a green roof located on top of the Quinpool Road Superstore for recreational purposes. Although the area was originally a Japanese garden, due to vandalism the space was modified and now includes a large grass lot with a deck as well as some small bushes and trees. Installed when the building was put up in 1978, the roof is composed of a layer of cement, a membrane layer, 8 inches of Styrofoam and 5 inches of soil. Therefore, along with providing residents with a green area to relax, the 45000² foot green roof acts as an excellent insulator for the ceiling below.

Solar Panels

In the late 1980s, 2880² feet of south-facing solar panels set at a 45° angle were installed on the roof of Quinpool Towers. The energy captured by the panels provides the building with its hot water supply. The heating system is composed of a glycol circulator, a counter-flow heat exchanger, a domestic water circulator and a number of glass-lined hot-water storage tanks. Operations manager, Henry Andrews, estimates that 6 hours of solar heating saves about 75 litres of oil (up to 25000 litres per year). More information about the system can be found at:



http://www.canren.gc.ca/renew_ene/index.asp?CaID=50&PgID=934

Sustainable Transportation

The central location of Quinpool Towers facilitates sustainable transportation, encouraging people to walk or bike rather than drive. Of the 140 spaces in the building's parking garage about 40% are used by tenants. Cyclists have access to a bike cage where they can safely store their bikes. Residents do not have to leave the building to access the grocery store or post office, and other commodities can be found within walking distance.

Problems Encountered

So far, Quinpool Towers has not experienced many problems from the green initiatives that have been taken. Aside from the vandalism to the Japanese garden, the only other issue has been related to wind and the solar panels. Originally, some of the panels were facing towards the harbour and were blown off by large gusts of wind. However, the problem has been addressed and the panels survived the strong winds of Hurricane Juan with no major damage.



Future Initiatives

A geothermal heat storage system has been installed to hold the hot water when it is not in demand in order to decrease the building's dependence on oil. The federal government has not yet connected the solar panels to the geothermal system however, so it remains a work in progress. In the near future, Killiam Properties plans to switch to natural gas rather than oil to run the building.