

Cope Plastics and Day & Night Solar Grow Green Together Giving Two Companies a Bright Future

Sometimes a bright idea can come from a casual conversation. That's what happened when Larry Phillips an employee at Cope Plastics told management about his church installing a solar energy system from Day & Night Solar. Solar energy has certainly been an attractive source for alternative, sustainable energy, but it has been cost prohibitive. If a small, not-for-profit entity like a church was able to afford a solar energy system, Cope wanted to find out how.

Larry's "bright idea" inspired Cope to investigate using solar power to run their recycling side of the business. Solar could double their commitment to being good stewards of the environment by making the processing center itself greener. Andy Ferguson, Cope's Project Manager, was responsible for the center.

Making solar affordable involves securing all of the state and federal grants, financing and calculating the ROI. The process can be so overwhelming that companies interested in solar energy don't always know where to start, so they do nothing. Day & Night Solar saw this challenge and came up with the solution. They take a project from start to finish, calculating the ROI, securing the grants, filling in the paperwork, arranging for the financing and managing the installation.

Thanks to their dual, "green" thinking of saving energy and ultimately saving money for their clients, Day & Night Solar grew rapidly from their roots in Southern Illinois in 2009 to working with clients across the entire United States.

As to how easy the turn-key process was, Andy said, "There was absolutely no risk on our part. Day & Night handled all of the details and gave us the proposal. We crunched our own numbers and found that it worked. Day & Night helped us reduce the main obstacle to solar power, cost." Now, Cope Plastics has a solar system powering their recycling center and front office. This "bright idea" became a reality.

In addition to solar panels and a Processing Center, going green has helped Cope Plastics grow in unexpected ways. In 2011, Cope's Environmental Program marked the following achievements:

- Increased the total pounds of recycled plastic from 1.1 million pounds to 1.5 million pounds, an increase of over 36%
- Recycled over 300,000 pounds of cardboard
- Evaluated their inventory control and shipping, reducing fuel costs and carbon emissions
- Delighted 200+ employees with 3-4 day work weeks to reduce carbon emissions
- Offered free paper recycling and electronics recycling to employees resulting in 15 tons of paper and 13,000 pounds of electronics recycled in 2011 alone

Cope Plastics continues to grow its recycling efforts and commitment to making the world a better place. With the need for sustainable, clean energy, Day & Night Solar continues to grow as they listen to the needs of their clients. Their green thinking includes many creative ways of utilizing solar energy.

Two companies with two bright futures show how thinking green can help serve your employees, customers, be good environmental stewards, and help your business grow.