

'Green' animal clinic to open Monday

Tony Kindelspire, Longmont Times-Call
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LONGMONT — Monday will be a busy one for Dr. Matthew Rooney and his team. They'll close their former veterinary clinic at 8 a.m. and open Aspen Meadow Veterinary Specialists in its new, much larger space by 5 p.m. that same day.

Moving an entire clinic in a day will be hectic, Rooney said, but he believes his colleague Christine Kjeell, who will direct the move, is up to the task.

Aspen Meadow is vying to become the first LEED-certified veterinary clinic in the state, and possibly the first in the country.

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a building certification awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council. Businesses like Aspen Meadow, an emergency and specialty-care clinic, earn points toward the certification by meeting environmental and sustainable criteria in design and use. For example, the business used recycled materials during the building's remodel and installed special lighting and water fixtures.

"It's hard to do this, but it's not impossible, and we just want to show that it's not impossible," said Kjeell, Aspen Meadow's hospital director.

Rooney, who earned his veterinary degree from Colorado State University, has wanted to have a completely "green" clinic since he opened his first in 2004.

On Monday, his \$2.4 million investment will come to fruition. Going green fits with his clinic's philosophy of environmental sustainability, he said.

Even at his former location just down the street, the clinic was already composting and recycling.

When he found the former Mazda dealership at 104 S. Main St. up for sale, he already knew he wanted to buy an existing building to build his new clinic, and he would reuse as many of the materials as he could in the remodel.

The countertops in the lobby are made from recycled glass material. Computers everywhere will allow for completely paperless medical records. The building's electricity comes 100 percent from wind power, and all of the water fixtures are low-flow, resulting in a 30 percent to 50 percent reduction in water use, Rooney said.

He even went to the expense of getting "double-flush" toilets from Europe because they're so hard to find in the U.S.

"Just that alone, we projected we're going to cut our water consumption by 30 percent," Rooney said.

Not only will he and his staff of 37 enjoy working in their new state-of-the-art environment, but they'll also enjoy the extra space, Rooney said.

Starting Monday, Aspen Meadow will have 8,400 square feet to work with, rather than the 3,200 square feet at the former spot.

"And it functioned like 2,000 square feet," Rooney said, smiling.