

CASE STUDY } Solar panels

Going green can be pricey, but for this veterinary practice owner, it's worth every penny.

By Steve Bennaka

Want to go green in a big way? Follow the lead of Dr. Mark Hall, owner of Blount Veterinary Clinic in Maryville, Tenn., who installed 33 solar panels on his clinic's roof. It's a system that Dr. Hall expects to take a substantial bite out of his clinic's power costs—although it could be more than 7 years before the system pays for itself. Hall currently pays 11 cents per kilowatt hour, but he gets a credit of more than twice that—23 cents per kilowatt hour—for the solar energy generated on his roof. Hall estimates if the panels generate half his power, all of his power costs are covered.

Hall's system is capable of generating 230 watts of DC power per solar panel, totaling 7.59 kilowatts an hour. That power is converted to AC power by a device on the side of the veterinary clinic that works at more than 95 percent efficiency. The system cost Hall \$53,750, but that was offset by a \$1,000 green power award when the system went operational. Plus, Hall gets \$15,000 in a federal stimulus money grant administered by the Tennessee Solar Institute at the University of Tennessee and he received a federal tax credit of more than \$16,000 on his 2010 tax return.

Almost half the cost of the



To see more photos of this clinic's solar panels, [press this icon](#).

solar system was paid for with government money and that does not include deductions for depreciation, if Hall chooses to claim them. Hall's setup faces a few degrees off due

south, and it weighs about 4 to 5 pounds per square foot. The system can withstand a 155-mph wind and half-inch hail. It's warranted to still produce 80 percent of its capacity in 25 years.

HOSPITAL design

10 simple tips: Make your practice more green

Building a green facility might seem like a daunting—and expensive—task. But before you throw up your hands and build a trash-generating, energy-hogging, water-wasting facility, take a look at what Dr. Matt Rooney has done.

Dr. Rooney, owner of Aspen Meadow Veterinary Specialists in Longmont, Colo., recently built one of the most efficient veterinary facilities in the country. Team members have adopted the practice's mission to be kind to the earth, ensuring that almost nothing goes to waste. Press the icons below to read 10 of Dr. Rooney's ideas that you can implement yourself.



Use waste stations.

Purchase efficient appliances.

Consider alternative transportation.

Install carbon dioxide sensors.

Reuse materials.

Buy wind energy.

Use earth-friendly paint.

Plant a garden.

Paint the roof.

Educate your clients.



HOSPITAL design

VIDEO SERIES: **Building a green practice**

Dr. Michelle Chappell, owner of the environmentally friendly Mariposa Veterinary Clinic in Lenexa, Kan., shares her advice and experiences from building green in this **9-part video series**.



Part 1: Why did Dr. Chappell build green?



Part 2: Where did she go for help with building green?



Part 3: How did building green change her practice?



Part 4: Why did she think outside the box when considering earth-friendly materials?



Part 5: How did she choose eco-friendly paints, stains, and other materials?



Part 6: Why did she use insulated windows?



Part 7: What are the benefits of using CFC bulbs?



Part 8: What did she consider for landscaping and water runoff systems?



Part 9: How did she choose environmentally friendly cleaning supplies?



Part 10: How has building a practice affected her perspective on business and medicine?



Building Reuse



VIDEO: How to build **green**

At the 2011 Veterinary Economics Hospital Design Conference in Kansas City, Heather Lewis, AIA, presented on how to build a green veterinary hospital. Check out this video for the highlights from her session.