

# *Edmonds Sustainability Heroes*

*Strom Peterson*



*(On April 11th, 2013, Hank Landau and Jim Stevens, members of the Mayor's Climate Protection Committee of Edmonds interviewed Strom Peterson, a resident, local business owner, and current City councilmember, to learn his success story with increasing energy efficiency. The following article describes his motivation, efforts, and results.)*

Where energy efficiency is concerned, Strom Peterson is an individual who quickly reveals the direction his inner compass points. Without the additional advantage of being the property owner for his business location, he operates The Cheesemonger's Table as closely to this guide as he can. From his position as an employer, he promotes administrative measures that deepen the savings his business realizes. Not everyone understands the concept of vampire load, the power that many electronic devices constantly consume, even when turned off. Those who work for Strom have learned this concept well, and they commonly unplug such devices when closing shop for the night.

He refers, in mild self-deprecation, to the refrigerated cases that hold the products he sells as his 'black heart'. Of course, operating a business based on dairy products is not possible without refrigeration, so he has made certain to purchase the most efficient units feasible. Lighting choices for his business started with CFLs, but are now moving to LEDs as they become

more available at lower prices. He professes satisfaction with the things he has done for his business and his home. Some of those things are not obvious until one digs deeper. Wherever he can, Strom purchases locally from sustainable producers. He has worked to time deliveries of his supplies so trucks come less frequently. He strives to hire locally and encourages employees to use transit and other alternatives to automobiles for commuting. He himself owns a Nissan Leaf, and believes in the benefits the ENERGY STAR program brings consumers who purchase goods that carry its label.

He advises others to look beyond the simple bounds of 'return on investment' when evaluating potential efficiency measures, and reach to do what is right, beyond what makes only economic sense. He believes the Community Solar Program on the Frances Anderson Center, the City's plastic bag ban, and the ENERGY STAR label for City Hall demonstrate Edmonds' commitment to doing these right things. Again, as a business owner, he cites how that presents the opportunity to show employees and customers ways to operate more sustainably. His upbringing played a major role in defining this attitude toward the environment. His mother and a friend started the recycling program in Santa Fe, NM, and his grandfather lived as a rancher, passing along the value of caring for the environment to ensure it continues to care for you. Certainly, there's an idea to live by.