



Caroba Plastics, Inc.: Custom Efficiency Rebate Helps to Keep Business Booming



“People often think this custom project analysis will be difficult and take a long time to get cash back — it doesn’t.”

Leslie Stewart
Xcel Energy Business Solutions
Consultant

Company growth is always a good thing. But it can mean buying more equipment to keep up with demand, which means additional capital expenses.

That was the case for Caroba Plastics, Inc. in Englewood, Colorado. With 30 years manufacturing semiconductor reticle cassettes, water proof cases, catheter tip caps and many more medical supplies, business was booming. Thanks to the organic growth of new and longtime customers, it meant the need to buy a new hybrid molding machine, powered by a combination of hydraulic and electric energy. It was the first hybrid version the company had ever bought.

The CEO at Caroba Plastics, Inc. knew he wanted energy-efficient equipment because it would qualify for Xcel Energy rebates, offsetting the cost. With that in mind, he went shopping.

Catering to Customer Demands

Caroba Plastics, Inc. operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 360 days a year. There isn’t much time to slow down and swap out equipment.

“We have 30 machines total and didn’t want to affect any customers, due to the loss of machine time,” says Kelly Rykowski, Facilities Manager.

This wasn’t the first time Caroba implemented energy efficiency measures in its facility. They had upgraded to energy efficient lighting and compressed air equipment, and now wanted to know if this new project would qualify for another rebate.

“We have many standard programs for things like lighting or HVAC equipment,” says Leslie Stewart, Xcel Energy Business Solutions Consultant. “In this case, they went through our Custom Efficiency Program where we look at a specific piece of equipment, determine its energy efficiency and calculate the rebate based on energy savings.”



Project Highlights

Project Detail	New hybrid injection molding machine
Estimated Project Cost	\$292,800
Rebate and Bonus Amounts	\$9,100
Estimated Energy Saved	22.808 kW
Total Annual Energy Savings	195,366 kWh
Estimated Annual Cost Savings	\$12,400

The Custom Efficiency Program captures projects that don't fit into Xcel Energy's standard rebate programs. Past examples of custom items that were rebated include high-efficiency snow guns at ski resorts, high-speed refrigerator doors in warehouses and a pulp press at a sugar beet factory. Stewart says many customers don't realize a tailor-made solution is an option.

"People often think this custom project analysis will be difficult and take a long time to get cash back and it doesn't," she adds.

Mr. Rykowski is quick to compliment Stewart's quick action.

"She guided me through the process which sped everything up," Rykowski says.

Caroba chose a hybrid machine for its fast work and energy efficiency. It's a combination of a 2-stage pump and electric servomotors. The servomotors only rotate when required, to control the output volume and pressure of hydraulic oil. The benefits of such a machine include real energy-savings, wider range of injection control and higher precision when molding products.

Installing the new machine cost Caroba \$292,800 but an Xcel Energy rebate of over \$9,000 helped offset the cost and will save them an estimated \$12,000 per year in energy costs. That's money they can use to buy more equipment or make other improvements within the business.

The estimated 195,366 kilowatt-hours Caroba saves each year is the equivalent of powering 21 homes for a year, according to the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator.

Stewart points out that once a customer has experience partnering with Xcel Energy, they realize that more energy efficiency work can be done.

"Repeat business is very important in managing energy costs — it is never one project and done," she says. "We always suggest that they continue to work with us to find additional solutions."

More energy savings to come

Mr. Rykowski says there are already plans to add three more machines this year.

"Growth is a great problem to have," he says. "We just have to keep up with it and knowing we can get rebates for additional machines helps make the decision for us."



For more information about Xcel Energy's rebate programs, please visit xcelenergy.com or call the Business Solutions Center at **855.839.8862**.