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Air Barrier cuts energy costs and lets doors stay open

Leaving a door open is a sure way to waste energy. But an energy-saving air barrier is changing that. Using fans to send a uniformly smooth current of air across a doorway is allowing companies to control temperatures in everything from loading bays to freezers without opening and closing doors.

This latest air barrier technology is designed to establish a 90-percent seal on an open door in 24-km winds. An ATCO Gas study of this technology showed natural gas consumption dropping by 18 percent as a direct result of air barrier installation.

Acklands-Grainger, one of Canada's largest distributors of industrial products, has purchased over 60 air barriers from Enershield Industries and is installing them in every new facility. The air barrier reduced heat loss to the point where overhead heaters in its Saskatoon warehouse were removed. Many clients opt to lease the system for around $300 a month. According to Enershield president Michael Launer, clients can expect a two-year payback period in situations where doors are left open approximately two hours per day.

The technology is flexible enough to work on large openings like loading bays, and the company is developing a barrier for aircraft hangars. It's also planning to launch a mini-system that will work on drivethrough takeout windows.

Several Alberta municipalities have also purchased air barriers and are awaiting final installation. Some of these municipal projects include: the City of Calgary Transit Garage, the City of Edmonton Police Services, and two recreation centres in Edmonton.