

Slumberland Furniture

FAST FACTS:

Industry:

Retail

Company Size:

128+ stores in 12 states with over 2,400 employees

Company Mission:

"To improve the lives of every customer."

Type of Renewable Energy Used:

255 watt, fixed tilt modules – 40kW per installation

Installation Size:

156 panels per roof atop 10 locations – 400kW in total



ABOUT SLUMBERLAND

Founded in 1967 in Richfield, Minnesota, Slumberland Furniture began as a mattress and La-Z-Boy specialty shop whose mission has been to make people comfortable with both its products and prices. Over the past 40 years, Slumberland has expanded to more than 128 stores across 13 states and is now the Midwest's largest retailer of Sealy and Simmons Mattresses, one of America's top sellers of La-Z-Boy upholstery, and has earned the designation of Elite Retailer from Tempur-Pedic International. The family-owned business has a deep commitment to community service, and dedicates 10% of its profits to charitable giving every year.

THE BEGINNING

Over a Thanksgiving meal, Slumberland Furniture President, Kenny Larson, had a casual conversation with a friend about the possibility of Slumberland adopting a renewable energy electricity system. Culminating from Slumberland's long-time "green" leadership, the discussion was another step forward in Slumberland's commitment to environmentally conscious practices, which are numerous and diverse in scope.

For decades, Slumberland has recycled its unused and waste materials, including both furniture (such as old mattresses) and packaging materials (such as cardboard, plastic, and Styrofoam). In fact, each year, Slumberland recycles approximately 280 tons of cardboard, 5 tons of plastic, 5 tons of Styrofoam, and saves about 640 tons of CO2 emissions by recycling light bulbs. Slumberland also shreds over 5,000 mattresses (in lieu of letting them take up space in landfills) and donates over 4,000 mattresses annually. Plus, in addition to recycling other items, such as metal, paint, electronics, cans and bottles, Slumberland has also increased their fleet's miles per gallon (MPG) rate 15% by reducing truck idle time, limiting top speed, and providing newer equipment for their trucks. Additionally, Slumberland promotes the reuse of its customers' donated furniture through its partnership with Bridging, to whom Slumberland annually donates hundreds of mattresses for distribution to families in need of a home and warm place to lay their heads.

Larson knew a renewable energy solution would further Slumberland's sustainability goals, cut energy costs, and fit perfectly with Slumberland's environmentally friendly mission. Soon after his holiday meal, Larson brought Geronimo Energy to Slumberland to help his company achieve its next green power goal.

SUNNY MINNESOTA

Slumberland was quick to identify Geronimo Energy as its renewable energy partner, and soon, the two were hard at work with plans to bring solar panels to several Slumberland retail store locations. Together, Geronimo and Slumberland designed a plan that would include the installation of solar panels atop eight stores, one distribution warehouse, and one corporate office in the Minneapolis/ St. Paul area of Minnesota.

Installation of the first panels began on a sunny September morning at Slumberland's Roseville store, followed by the construction of seven additional retail locations in Bloomington, Fridley, Maple Grove, Maplewood, Owatonna, Woodbury, and St. Paul, as well as an installation on the roof top of Slumberland's corporate headquarters and distribution warehouse in Little Canada, Minnesota. From start to finish, each installation took seven to nine days. All ten installations met completion within months of the project start - all and all, only one year and one month after the initial Thanksgiving dinner discussion.

THE DETAILS

The solar panels used on all of the Slumberland rooftops are 255 watt modules. Each installation is a 40 kilowatt (kW), fixed tilt system. Any energy not used by the stores is pushed back out into the Xcel Energy grid for consumption by the surrounding communities. The installations are part of Xcel Energy's Solar Rewards Program, which includes net metering, and bonds the selling of Solar Renewable Energy Credits to Xcel.

As part of the initiative, Slumberland launched a successful marketing campaign called "Smart Stores". The campaign brought awareness to its impressive customer base by identifying solar-powered stores with a newly branded logo, promoting social media pieces that touted the benefits of solar power for Slumberland and the surrounding communities, offering in-store handouts such as green care tips for furniture, and hosting green-themed events like furniture recycling events and a solar celebration event.

BRIGHT RESULTS

Every year, the Slumberland rooftop panels produce 500,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of clean, renewable energy to help Slumberland power its solar-installed stores and reduce its overall electricity expense. Each of the ten, 40 kW solar installations reduces Slumberland's electricity usage by an average of 22% per store. This savings in electricity usage is the equivalent weight of 815,000 pounds of CO2 emissions annually, or the amount of electricity needed to power approximately 60 residential homes each year.

As part of the initiative, Slumberland has made a commitment to renewable energy for the next 25 years. "Taking steps toward improving the future of our planet is really just another way we try to improve the lives of our customers. Whether providing the bed for a good night's sleep or the energy for a nightlight, we're here to help," said Slumberland President, Kenny Larson. "As a company, we are committed to environmentally friendly practices. Plus, by reducing our own energy costs, we can pass the benefits directly on to our customers."

GERONIMO ENERGY

Geronimo Energy (Geronimo) is a utility and commercial-scale developer of wind and solar energy projects based in Edina, Minnesota. As one of the Midwest's largest renewable energy developers, Geronimo boasts several operating wind farms and solar projects, some of which are landmark installations both regionally and nationally. Geronimo has a strategic partnership with Enel Green Power North America, giving it the credibility and capital strength necessary to deliver on projects for customers and communities. With a large development pipeline of wind and solar projects in various stages throughout the United States, Geronimo is poised to develop thousands of megawatts of clean energy - enough to power over one million American homes.

