



Saving by Going Greener

Company provides data on costs to run common electrical appliances for consumers, now available at Strosnidlers.

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By **Ken Moore**

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Potomac — When Susan Marinelli wanted a new coffee maker, she also wanted to shop at a local store. When Marinelli walked in to Strosnidlers, she found tags on display, educating consumers about different appliances and the different amounts of energy each one uses.

"There was all this information in the aisle about how much energy you use and how much it can save you in the long run," Marinelli said. "If folks knew a little bit more about how much energy they are using and how much it costs them they might make different decisions."

Last month, Strosnidlers Hardware in Potomac Village teamed up with Savenia Labs, an independent testing laboratory that provides lab tested energy and environmental impact ratings on popular appliances.

"It's like Miles Per Gallon for your appliances," said John Jabara, founder of Bethesda's Savenia Labs. "The ratings give consumers the information on how much products cost to run."

Many appliances cost more to run in energy costs than their purchase price, according to Jabara. Savenia Labs reports that many coffeemakers cost over \$500 to run over a 5-year lifetime, while energy saving models can cost about \$30.

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Kim Cuthbert, of Strosnidlers, is starting to get a sense of what's coming off the shelf, she said. While some consumers don't mind that appliances cost more to run, "others are interested in appliances that save money," she said. "We stay current and open to new philosophies."

Jabara thought it was strange that there was no energy usage or environmental impact information available to consumers on the vast majority of the world's most popular electrical appliances. He founded his Bethesda company in 2009 to provide such answers.

He calls it a "win-win situation" for consumers, retailers, the environment, and manufacturers in the long run.

"There's a magic moment that happens, it's about education," said Jabara at the unveiling last month. "With small changes ... we can have a huge impact in energy dependency in the future."

Cuthbert said, "Whether people are interested in green money or green environment, consumers are more aware of their pocketbook and their impact on the environment."

County Council President Roger Berliner sent his staff to the launching last month.

Marinelli hopes such information continues to expand.

"Anything you need to plug in, it's great information to have," said Marinelli.

"I hope many stores adopt it. If they get to the Macy's and to the Bed Bath and Beyonds, then, oh my goodness," she said.



Photo contributed

John Jabara, founder of Savenia Labs, thought consumers should have access to information about environmental impacts and energy consumption when they buy electrical appliances.

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