

# Energy Conservation Case Study

## **Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport**

Management, Staff and Guests Partner in Energy Conservation

### **Corporate Overview**

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The Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport is located at 970 Dixon Road, near Toronto's Pearson International Airport. It is a corporate-managed hotel in the InterContinental Hotels Group. (IHG, headquartered in the UK, owns, manages, leases and franchises over 3,650 hotels in nearly 100 countries. Besides Holiday Inn, their brands include InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Staybridge Suites, Candlewood Suites and Hotel Indigo.)

The hotel is comprised of 445 rooms and 24,000 square feet of meeting space on eleven floors. Its amenities include a club floor, a business centre, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, the Metropolitan Restaurant and the Metro Bar, which includes a sushi bar. It was built as a Holiday Inn in 1971 and expanded in 1980. Briefly in the early 1990s, it was administered under the Crowne Plaza brand, but it soon reverted to the original name. It employs 250 to 300 employees according to the season.



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The Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport works very closely with the Holiday Inn Toronto-Yorkdale (3450 Dufferin Street), which is also corporate-managed by IHG. The two establishments collaborate on many programs relating to energy conservation and environmental awareness.

### **Corporate Guest Programs**

IHG encourages its hotels to manage energy consumption wisely. “InterContinental has played a key role throughout each hotel, and they have two programs that operate across the entire group of hotels,” says Tony Elenis, General Manager for the Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport. “There is always encouragement at a corporate level. They’re very much involved in moving forward with energy conservation, water conservation and community outreach.”

In one program, guests are provided with door cards printed on recycled paper and illustrated with an autumn forest view. It encourages those who are staying longer than one night to participate in the “Project Planet program” and agree to have their linen laundered every third day. (To request daily linen service, guests simply hang the card outside their door.)

A second piece reminds guests how much water is used in hotel laundry rooms, and how much detergent is added to wastewater. It suggests how they can help by reducing unnecessary towel washing: Please decide for yourself, towels in the bathtub mean ‘please change them!’ towels on the rack mean ‘I will use them again.’

Rooms are also supplied with in-room recycling services, and a third piece lets guests know that they are encouraged to recycle paper, envelopes, newspapers and magazines, aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles.

### **Energy Conservation**

The Holiday Inn Select Toronto Airport has taken steps to improve energy efficiency in its heating and cooling systems, lighting and by improving the building envelope. “The whole exterior of the building has been caulked,” says Maintenance Engineer John Tome. In addition, he says, “We have replaced 163 windows with thermal windows.”

All lighting is gradually being upgraded. “In all public areas and bedrooms, we’ve

replaced incandescent lighting with compact fluorescent bulbs,” Tome says. (CFLs use about 25% of the power of traditional light bulbs, and thus can represent electricity savings of about 75%. They also last as much as eight times longer.) All bathroom lighting has been changed from standard fluorescent fixtures to higher-efficiency T-8, which uses up to 35% less electricity.

“In conjunction with Coca Cola, we’ve replaced the pop machines with what they call the Smart Pop,” Tome continues. “It’s an electrical pop dispenser, but it uses credit cards or a room keycard.”

Another major change has taken place with our gas boilers. “We’ve replaced two boilers for the domestic water for the guests rooms with the very high energy efficiency boilers. Two more boilers were replaced for public areas, and one was replaced for heating, so it was a total of five,” Tome says. These major changes will likely add up to considerable energy savings, but figures are not yet available. “We are in a process of collecting all the data from Toronto Hydro and putting out numbers.”



## Recycling

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“We’ve had recycling programs for many years, and they’re very well received by our guests,” says Elenis.

“At the receiving area, it’s all source-separated and a recycling company comes in and picks it up,” says Tome, who mentions that liquor bottles have now been added to the list of returnable bottles. “Also, we are in the process of introducing, in partnership with our recycling company, a zero-waste meeting option. We are waiting for collateral material to start to introduce it to every guest who has a meeting.”

## Water Conservation

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The City of Toronto estimates that one low-flow toilet conserves between about 10 and 12 litres of water per flush, and the hotel has started to replace its existing toilets with more water-efficient models. Also, older shower heads have all been replaced with high-efficiency shower heads provided by Enbridge, a move that can bring about a 35% to 70% reduction in water use.

“On the refrigeration side, in the kitchen we have replaced four condensing units from water-cooled to air-cooled. It’s an ongoing process; as equipment fails, if it’s water-cooled, we try to replace it with the air-cooled,” says Tome. “In order to save water, we’ve also replaced eight water-cooled ice machines with air-cooled ones.”



## Related Initiatives

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The hotel is putting in place many other measures related to environmental preservation. “For instance,” says Tome, “We’ve replaced the chlorine with salt water in our swimming pools, so not only does it smell better, but it’s better for you.”

Elenis reports that “We’re involving the use of organic items and encouraging vegetarian food in our menus for both hotels.

We have just completed running a very successful food promotion in A Taste of Ontario that included organic foods. We are now taking these green and healthy products and incorporating them into our core restaurant menus. Both hotels now have zero trans fats in the menus; if you are adding unnatural components in your food chain, that means you are using more energy somewhere along the line.”

“We are in the process of creating a green policy,” says Elenis. The hotel is establishing a Green Team, to be made up of hotel management and front-line employees.

“The Green Team committee will be driving the policy by championing it; there is a representative from each department that will drive the program within their own area and be part of the process moving forward. We’ll be launching it at our own employee assembly. We’ll make it fun, and talk about the benefits not only locally, but globally.”

He adds: “There’s a lot in the news now that we can capitalize on. People are very much more conscious today than they ever were.” The hotel has received 4 Green Keys from the Hotel Association of Canada’s (HAC) Green Key Eco-Rating Program.

## Conclusion

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“Conserving energy is not a hotel program, but a global program. We all need to play a key role, whether it’s in our home or in our business, to support it,” says Tony Elenis. “We are completely committed to it. We all need to take small steps to repair global damage.”

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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