

# LAFONTAINE GOES GOLD!

LaFontaine Automotive Group of Highland Michigan has great news! They just received their Gold (**LEED**) Certification on February 18, 2009. The new dealership which is a 63,000-square-foot facility opened on June 2, 2008 and is the home for Buick, Pontiac, GMC, and Cadillac. It is located on 24 acres on M-59/Highland Road just west of Hickory Ridge Road.

The \$15-million facility is the first GM dealership in the country to qualify for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification under the Green Building Rating System which is a nationally accepted benchmark for design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings under guidelines established by the U.S. Green Building Council. The dealership received 45 out of the 46 eligible points and only 6 were required to get 39 points to receive Gold (**LEED**) Certification. The highest possible level they could achieve!

The Green Building Rating System is designed to reward best practices and assist the owners in solving problems, improving performance, and maintaining the condition of their buildings over lengthier periods of time. This success is recognized and “points” are awarded based on whether those standards are met in each of the six key areas of human and environmental health:

- **Sustainable Site Development**

When developing the site they had to be sensitive to encroaching on agricultural lands, comprising existing wildlife, and exacerbating local and regional erosion.

- **Water Efficiency**

A special car wash system recycles 85 percent of the water otherwise wasted by conventional car washes.

Indigenous plants are used for landscaping because they require less water.

A roof storm water retention system provides water for the landscape irrigation. The storm water is pretreated prior to entering a nearby clay-lined retention pond.

For both customers and the facility's 150 employees, low-flush toilets reduce the amount of the water used per flush.

Integrated paving products not only look good, they reduce water runoff.

- **Energy & Atmosphere**

The facility's centerpiece-and most costly single expenditure at \$600,000 is a 64-well geothermal system that heats and cools the building by capturing energy stored in the earth 350 feet below the building. The

system transfers energy to and from the facility with closed loops of fluid-filled tubes.

Eighty-five skylights fill the facility with natural light and reduce the need for artificial lighting; special prisms magnify the light for even more efficiency.

Sophisticated photocells and computer-controlled lighting helps ensure lights are turned off in unused areas and can turn off artificial lighting when there is enough daylight to illuminate the building. Motion sensing that will turn off the lights if there is no movement in the room. The interior and exterior lights are on timers to insure lights are not left on. Also, automatically diarists satellite and adjusts for day light savings and weather. It has a smart energy management system which allows us to dial in off site to allow checking efficiency and turnoff lights. Efficient T5 fluorescent lighting provides more light using half the energy of conventional lighting.

The roof was designed white to absorb the heat and heat index. Green belts throughout the facility exterior and colored paving material reduce the “heat island” effect of the facility.

The service department fills customers’ vehicle tires with nitrogen vs. conventional compressed air because the unique properties of nitrogen can provide fuel-economy benefits. Also, because it does not permeate porous tire walls as quickly, nitrogen can keep tires properly inflated longer, contributing to more even tire wear and, therefore, longer tire life. 3M composite product was used as wheel weights vs. the traditional lead base wheel weights.

A windmill generates energy to pump retention pond water for irrigation.

- **Materials & Resources**

Heavy use of recycled content supplied by firms within a 500-mile radius of the facility to promote local economies and cut down on transportation-related energy

Exterior masonry is 40-percent recycled content.

Recycled aluminum is used on the building’s exterior.

Metal decking is at least 60-percent recycled content and metal framing is 2—percent recycled content.

Asphalt recycled basecoat

- **Indoor Environmental Quality**

Use of numerous low-emitting adhesives, sealants, paints and carpet systems.

The service department’s 33 bay uses vegetable oil vs. caustic fluid in the hydraulic lifts.

The body shop paint booth uses a waterborne basecoat paint by PPG with zero volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions, and is one of the only two such paint booths in Michigan. Even the cleaning system for the paint wands does not generate VOCs.

Twelve vehicle detailing bays use green cleaning products.

All cleaning products used to clean the building are green  
We have ongoing recycling with 4 dumpsters and recycling bins @ all customer contacts  
All products used at events are recycled or organic. Golf shirts bought back emissions for Grand Opening event  
Natural, light-filled spaces promote a more pleasing and productive work environment.

- **Innovation & Design Process**

Provided a building that creates a healthy environment for people to work and shop for automobiles.

To the LaFontaines, “going green” was the only way to go. They put their heart and soul into developing a building that would not only bring people and business to the community, but would showcase environmentally sound practices. Besides the energy savings of as much as 50 percent, there are so other many motivating factors, including creating a more pleasant experience for their customers, a more productive workplace for their employees, and a healthier environment for all.

As a result, many visitors walk through the doors of the dealership in search of more than a fantastic deal on a Buick, Pontiac, GMC or a Cadillac. Some come just to marvel at the dealership and others come in search of answers to their energy-efficiency questions. Everyone is welcome, the dealership is an ongoing education and they encourage schools, churches, and groups to come and take a tour.

The LaFontaine Automotive Group features 14 franchises including Buick, Pontiac, GMC, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, Scion, Suzuki and Kia. Not to mention an available Pre-Owned Inventory of 500 plus domestic and imported vehicles. Mike and Maureen LaFontaine are happy to announce their newest facility to serve surrounding Metro Detroit communities. Since 1984, the LaFontaine’s are committed to provide excellent customer service to each and every customer they have had the pleasure of serving. Come in and experience the Family Deal and be prepared to be amazed!