

## **4.3.2 Hospitality Industry: Lodging**

### *Case Study #1*

**BUSINESS: Arbor House — An Environmental Inn; Madison, Wisconsin (238-2981)**

#### **COMPANY BACKGROUND**

Arbor House provides lodging and food services as a bed and breakfast operation. Owners John (Quad/Graphics Enviro Manager) and Kathy Imes began their business in 1994 centered around their desire of “greening” the old-style inn. An integrated annex was added in 1995.

#### **MOTIVATION**

Create a unique bed and breakfast business that was cost efficient, energy efficient, and environmentally sound. The challenge was to make the business economically viable, sustainable, and a working model for similar small businesses interested in environmentally conscious operations.

#### **STRATEGIES**

Perform a “cost analysis” to structure the business to be competitive and profitable. Attract clientele to an establishment by using healthy foods, fabrics, and businesses practices. Use the historical significance of the inn as a community asset.

#### **PREVIOUS USE**

Previous owners operated it as The Old Plough Inn Bed and Breakfast. The building had outdated mechanicals and needed updating. The inn was originally a Civil War era stagecoach house.

#### **CURRENT USE**

The Imes remodeled the old inn as an “ultimate form of recycling,” an adaptive reuse of an historic structure. The green philosophy was also adapted to virtually every aspect of the inn’s operation including cooking, cleaning, textiles, use of space and energy, and choice of less toxic carpet materials and wall coverings. When possible, only natural fiber materials were used. Bed linens are 100 percent cotton.

When carpets were replaced, 100 percent wool carpets were installed with a jute backing. Carpet tacks were used for installation. In the breakfast room/great room, ceramic floor tile is made of 80 percent post-consumer glass. The ceramic tile in the bathrooms are 55 percent post consumer glass. Low flow showerheads and toilets save water use. One room features plant-derived paints and stains. All paints used in the remodeling are natural and non-toxic.

Insulated window treatments are used to enhance the passive cooling and heating. Ceiling fans assist in keeping the rooms cool. In the Annex, 12" thick walls made of Faswall from Ottumwa, Iowa, help keep the building 16° cooler than the outside temperature. Faswall consists of 85 percent old wood pellets and 15 percent Portland cement made into blocks. Hydronic heating

was installed in the Annex, and solar panels supplement the hot water system. There is a communal, wood burning fireplace for additional warmth and ambience.

The flooring at the Arbor House is all natural wood and, where wood was replaced, recycled wood was installed. In the home section, the Ecolon carpeting is used. This is made from old milk jugs made into carpeting. Though it is good quality carpeting, it is not made to withstand business reception area traffic.