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TALKIN' GREEN

FRITZ KREISS

SUSTAINABILITY & RENEWABLE ENERGY EXPERT



Drill to renewable energy independence



What the frack, you say? Frack no! This is about a different kind of drilling; drilling geothermal wells. You see, your home or business is sitting on the biggest renewable energy opportunity that exists – the earth. Just six feet below ground surface, temperatures remain steady year round. By accessing that temperature through a geothermal system, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by 50-70% compared to traditional systems.

So why doesn't everyone have a geothermal HVAC system?

The main deterrent is the initial

outlay for equipment and installation. Typically, putting in a geothermal heat pump (GHP) requires a major investment in the cost of the vertical or horizontal system loops; loops that should last 50 years.

The installations are further complicated in extreme climates where buildings have a much greater need for their heating or cooling load. Systems have to be oversized to manage these larger loads, increasing costs by up to 40%. And an increase of 40% is often times a deal buster.

The solution is a Hybrid GHP

A Hybrid GHP simply combines a smaller geothermal system integrated with traditional equipment; managing the peak load and greatly reducing initial cost. Though the control systems may require a little more sophistication in the logic, in order to manage when the hybrid

components turn on and how much, studies have shown that a hybrid system can reduce initial budget costs by up to 40%, with minimal impact on energy cost savings. What that hybrid looks like – can be different in every situation.

In a northern climate, it could mean adding a natural gas boiler, or even solar thermal panels with energy storage to help provide the added heat required on the coldest days. In a southern climate, a hybrid system might simply use a cooling tower on critical days to provide that extra cooling capacity. And for a site that does not have the land to support 100% geothermal, a Hybrid GHP could mean the solution to making geothermal work.

By choosing the best hybrid option available, the potential savings for geothermal can also be increased. Options may include:

1. Water already being pumped on the property; like a domestic well.

2. An existing pond or body of water that could be brought into the system.

3. Rainwater/storm water storage systems that could replace the vertical wells.

4. The integration of an already existing thermal storage system.

With a potential 40% reduction in cost, a Hybrid GPP can make drilling your way to clean energy independence, an available option for everyone. Drill baby, drill!

Fritz Kreiss, CEO and president of Community Green Energy, LLC, has been involved in energy procurement and the field of sustainability for close to twenty years, with expertise in alternative energy development and finance, including wind and solar farm developments. www.communitygreenenergy.com

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