

# Concord rink in power play with National Grid

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Innovation is in the DNA of Carl Gray.

The longtime owner of Valley Sports Arena, a two-sheet ice rink complex in Concord, has been on the forefront of constant improvement – from working on various U.S. space programs to collecting more than 50 national titles since founding the Assabet Valley Girls Ice Hockey Program in 1972.

An engineer by training, Mr. Gray put his background in energy and data collection to use recently in converting the rink from electricity to a TecoChill gas-fired engine-driven chiller. The self-financed project was eligible for \$87,000 in energy efficiency incentives from National Grid.

Mr. Gray said he is saving approximately \$160,000 a year through the technology from Waltham-based Tecogen Inc. He anticipates the total payback for the project could be just three or four years.

He said he is not only reducing his operating costs by using low-cost natural gas, but the combined heat and power system reduces greenhouse gas emissions, thus shrinking the facility's carbon footprint.

"It is well worth the effort," said Mr. Gray. "The entire operation was first-rate."

Bruce S. Edwards, manager for National Grid's sales and programs operations, said Mr. Gray's efforts will hopefully be replicated by others.

"These are the types of projects that influence others to follow," he said. "You're thinking well beyond your own experience and we thank you for that."

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