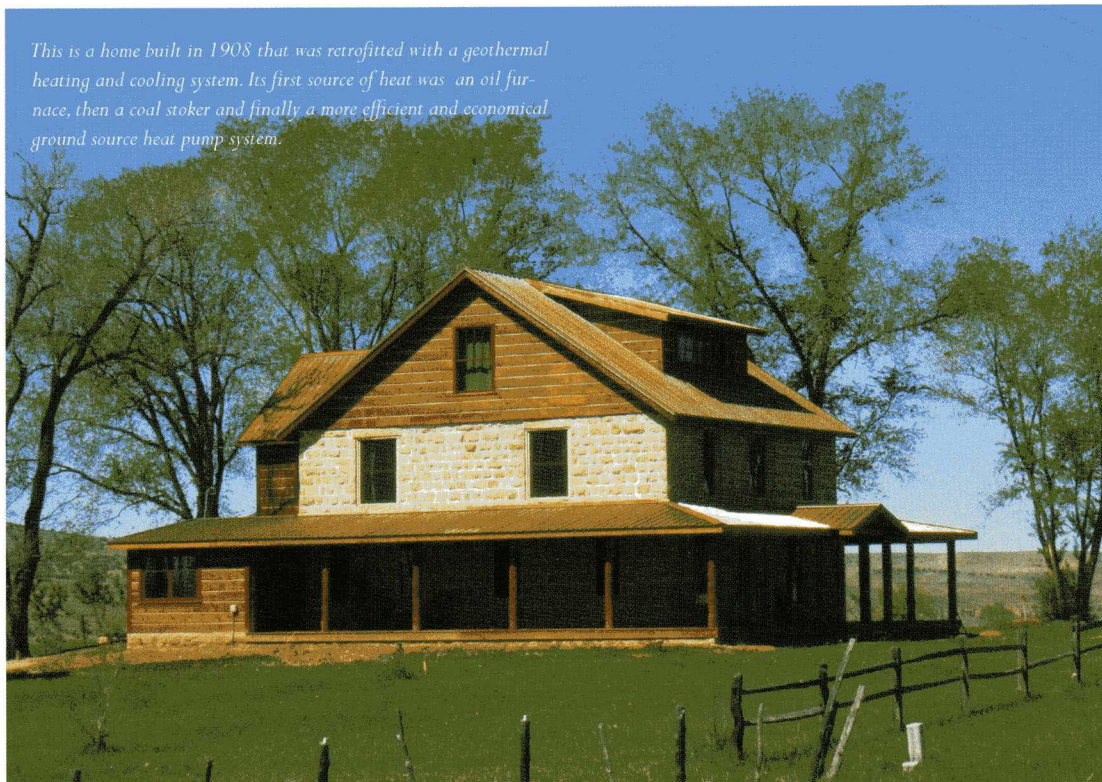


This is a home built in 1908 that was retrofitted with a geothermal heating and cooling system. Its first source of heat was an oil furnace, then a coal stoker and finally a more efficient and economical ground source heat pump system.



been designing and installing systems for more than 20 years.

Brown's decades of experience in geothermal makes her company one of the top installers in Indiana, but she is beginning to face increased competition from mainstream mechanical contractors who are entering the market in droves. Since their business activity has decreased from the housing bust, they have spent more time training in green-energy applications. Overholser, whose manufacturing company manages a few of these training programs, says mechanical contractors are often the last to change with technology, but the public has made up its mind.

"The difference this time around, as opposed to the fuel crisis during the Carter years, is that homeowners know that fuel prices will only increase—that the dip since winter 2008 is only temporary," he said.

And because of that, Overholser expects 2010 to be an even busier year than 2008. GBQ

INDUSTRY VETERAN WITHSTANDS RECESSION WITH GEOTHERMAL OPTIONS

SLAUGHTER'S HEATING AND COOLING, LLC

BY CHRISTOPHER CUSSAT

SLAUGHTER'S HEATING AND COOLING, LLC (SHC) literally places its trust in the Earth. By embracing and becoming experts in geothermal technologies, this family-owned and -operated company has poised itself to withstand economic downturns with a warm determination and cool, positive outlook that is refreshing and reviving in the business world these days.

After weathering the recession of the 1980s, SHC steered towards a more sustainable business model. Owner, Bill Slaughter, explains, "The recession encouraged us to explore economic and environmentally friendly alternatives that would benefit both our valued

customers and our own business." This led to SHC's now standard utilization of ground-source heat pumps (GSHPs) and geothermal heating and cooling.

Today, SHC is an all-inclusive heating, cooling, and refrigeration shop that specializes in GSHPs. Slaughter notes, "Our customers include individual custom homeowners, small-to-large commercial applications, and community- or government-funded buildings such as libraries. We are the front runner on the Western Slope of Colorado in geothermal heating and cooling."

The company's interest in GSHPs is one major component of its dedication to

“WE PROMOTE GEOTHERMAL FOR HEATING AND COOLING AS A RENEWABLE, ECONOMIC, AND COMFORTABLE WAY TO HEAT AND COOL BOTH RESIDENTIALLY AND COMMERCIALY.”

BILL SLAUGHTER, OWNER

green practices. Slaughter explains, “We promote geothermal for heating and cooling as a renewable, economic, and comfortable way to heat and cool both residentially and commercially. These pumps are 300–500 percent more efficient than conventional heating and cooling systems and are therefore much more gentle to the environment.”

The sustainable concept behind GSHPs is they are simply utilizing a renewable energy resource that is readily available—the ground’s near-constant temperature. According to the Department of Energy, two million operating GSHPs in the United States would reduce greenhouse emissions by over one million metric tons of carbon each year.

In fact, SHC has been promoting geothermal options as green, economical,

and worthwhile ways to heat and cool for over 14 years. Since other competitors have only recently been jumping on board this specialization, SHC has positioned itself as an industry leader in this particular field. Slaughter explains, “This has enabled all of us to effectively educate ourselves and be ‘train-the-trainer’ qualified.” He adds, “We also offer our services at a lower cost than our competitors.”

Through consistent marketing, SHC also helped to establish and sustain what Slaughter calls the local area’s “green wave,” which has become a vital part of the region’s economy. He elaborates, “We accomplish this through advertising, participating in Green Expos, signage on job sites, work trucks, and vans, as well as a large sign on our building that reads, ‘GEOTHERMAL.’”

In addition, SHC encourages carpooling and uses low-energy, recyclable, and biodegradable products at its office, shop, and job sites. Slaughter feels that SHC’s overall dedication to the environment definitely gives his company a competitive advantage.

Always proceeding forward with internal innovations, SHC recently utilized a business-coaching firm named X-stream Lean, LLC to enhance its competitive edge and bring its employees together as a team to achieve the company’s vision. In the long-term, SHC wants to promote the strength of solar applications while working in tandem with the geothermal process—as well as making its presence known in the geothermal-consulting arena.

Slaughter duly acknowledges how SHC’s clients have directly and positively affected the company’s growth. “Our satisfied customers are a huge part of our ongoing success and we try to do the best job possible—this enables us to continue enjoying the benefits of word-of-mouth advertising.” He also thanks his friend and mentor, Terry Proffer, a geothermal consultant who has specialized in this field for 16 years.

In conclusion, Slaughter humbly attributes SHC’s many notable accomplishments to “God, stubborn perseverance, patience, and the quality of life [he has] living on the beautiful Western Slope of Colorado.”

SHC’s helpful and informative Web site, www.geojunk.com, is a great tool for anyone seeking information about the company and what it has to offer. GBQ

SHC installed a six-ton Tranquility 27 ClimateMaster geothermal system in this new 3,500-square-foot home.

