



A third generation business, Ideal Supply Company Ltd. is a distributor of electrical supplies and automotive parts and equipment across south western Ontario. Tim MacDonald, President and CEO tells us how his company gives back both to the community and to the natural environment.

## QUICK FACTS

- Head office in Listowel since 1926
- Platinum Member of Canada's Best Managed Companies
- Owned by the Deschenes Group Inc. based in Montreal

IdealSupply



The original building in Listowel, c. 1930's  
Machine Shop Manager, Bryon Gebhardt



### What differentiates you from similar businesses in your industry?

Because we are distributors, we fly under the radar of the average consumer and in order to be successful, our service has to speak for itself. So we focus on providing the best and most timely service to our customers across rural Ontario. It hasn't been easy. We've had to adapt to challenges in the marketplace, most notably supplier consolidation, and we've also adapted to the demand for rapid delivery. We've focused on building leadership from within. Our strategy has been to focus on smaller communities in Ontario realizing that our delivery service is of greater value to customers outside metropolitan areas. Over the years, we've contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to hospitals and rec centres, and in 2006 we established the Ideal Supply Community Fund of \$80,000 to celebrate our 80 years in business. We feel it is really important for businesses to contribute to the communities in which they operate.

### What impact will a changing climate have on your business?

Well, we rely on roads and links to distribute products and so we are keenly aware of the impact that road closures, flooding, power outages and damage to other infrastructure have on our day-to-day business. We've invested in generators for our offices and our generator sales are increasing as many other individuals and businesses are now doing the same.

### What are you doing to reduce your impact on the environment?

We've been working to reduce the fuel consumption and paper use for office and our deliveries. This not only saves us money, but it helps reduce our carbon emissions. We've also been using Eyedro, which provides real-time data on electricity consumption. Using this, we can better understand where we are wasting electricity, so we've switched to energy-efficient lighting in our office. We're also stocking and investing in clean and renewable energy technology like solar panels, electric vehicle chargers, etc. There are many ways we can all work to mitigate climate change.