



Q & A with Marta Kelly, Saint John Energy

What does innovation mean to you?

It means keeping up with current technology and thinking outside the box. It also means not being constricted by the past and utilizing current technology.

How does your organization approach innovation?

[Saint John Energy is] in an industry that, over the past 90 years, hasn't changed. Now we have to challenge the status quo and keep up with renewable energy that eats into our margins. That's why we introduced and promote our mini split rental program.

Why do you think innovation is important for Saint John and the province?

Our neighboring communities, like Moncton and Fredericton, are already doing more. [Saint John is] not really on the leading edge of innovation, so we need to step up so we can be on the leading edge. It's frustrating to see Saint John fall behind.

What are some simple things people can do to drive positive change?

I would have to say don't be afraid to try new things and don't be afraid to take the leap and be on the bleeding edge of these things. Sometimes you have to be the guinea pig to be on the right side of innovation.

How is technology changing your business model?

It's weird because we're trying to promote not using our product, which is controversial because it affects our margins. As a result, we have find new renewable sources of energy that we can use to make up for those losses.

Where would you direct people if they wanted to learn more about innovation?

I would direct people to have conversations with the folks at UNB or NBCC because their academic programs seem to be gearing more towards innovations. In addition, there are several business accelerators popping up throughout the province that may be of assistance to those with innovative ideas.