
UNL Rec Center's elliptical machines used to convert energy

By Michelle Rieger

Published: Thursday, October 1, 2009

Updated: Thursday, October 1, 2009

It's hard to tell the difference, but the elliptical machines on the south glass wall of the Campus Recreation Center are much different from the ones right across from them.

Now, students using those elliptical machines on the south wall are not only contributing to their own health but also to the well-being of the environment.

Those ellipticals are part of ReRev, a system that takes human energy and makes a usable form of renewable energy. There is a device attached to the elliptical that converts kinetic energy to a direct current and then sends it to the ReRev system. ReRev then converts that into an alternating current, and then that energy can be used to power the building.

Bill Goa, senior associate director of Campus Recreation, said that they are still figuring out the exact numbers of how much money the facility is actually saving, but he estimates that several thousand dollars will be conserved each year.

"The more the machines are utilized, the more that we'll save," Goa said.

Seven of the elliptical machines in the Rec have ReRev systems attached, and flyers near the machines inform the users that they are energy efficient.

Goa also said that monitors will be placed near the ellipticals so that the user can see how much energy they are generating.

"We are hoping that will be an incentive for people to use the ellipticals," he said. "We'll then have a better sense of how much we saved."

Stacey Leo, a senior dance major, has been using the ellipticals for some time, but she wasn't aware that her energy from working out is put back into powering the building and saving the facility money overall.

"I feel a lot better it's not just me working out," Leo said. "It's me helping in a bigger way."

An average 30-minute workout will produce 50 watts of clean carbon-free electricity, which is enough energy to power a laptop for one hour or a compact fluorescent light bulb for two and a half hours.

"I'm glad the university is doing something to help the environment, in addition to the recycling bins," Leo said.

Currently, there are 11 facilities nationwide using this system.

According to rerev.com, a gym is the ideal setting to implement this system because there are few upfront costs, and it uses existing infrastructures.

Kayla Colgrove, a graduate assistant for strength and conditioning who works in the Rec, said the ellipticals are constantly busy because they are the most popular piece of equipment at the Rec.

"I'm improving my fitness level and improving the environment," she said. "I think a lot of people love the fact that they can do two things at once."

Goa said for now, the new systems are on a trial run, but there are plans to implement more energy-conserving machines in a future expansion of the East Campus Recreation Center.

"It's an experiment for our future needs," he said.

michellerieger@dailynebraskan.com

Advertising: [Submit a Classified](#) | [Advertising Rates](#) | [Contact an Ad Sales Representative](#)

About Us: [Contact Us](#) | [Work for Us](#)

© 2009 [Daily Nebraskan](#)

Powered by  and 