



Eureka!

by Lee Gregg

Ever have a terrific high-tech idea but discover that your basement or garage is not the ideal place to launch it? Welcome to the eureka project, Smartpark's high-tech start-up business incubator.

Located next to the University of Manitoba, Smartpark members are "Building a Community of Innovators." Part of their vision is to support high-tech innovation and entrepreneurship in the areas of information and communications technology, engineering and advanced materials, health and biotechnology, agricultural and nutritional sciences, and environmental solutions.

One resident company, SMT Research, Ltd. (www.smt-research.com), performs research and development in civionics – the science of meshing electronics with the design of civil structures. Products include remote-measuring units capable of interfacing with a variety of indoor air quality sensors to monitor CO2 levels,

and a system that detects and locates the first signs of water penetration through a building's envelope (walls, windows, doors, etc.). The moisture detection and monitoring system is being used as a preventative measure in B.C. to deal with the leaky condo situation, which will reach an estimated \$2 billion in water damages – SMT also applies the same monitoring technology to roof systems.

"We are working closely with Manitoba Hydro to install the system on their green roof," said Gamal Mustapha, President of SMT Research. "Buildings with a green roof require a method to detect leaks without having to destroy the garden."

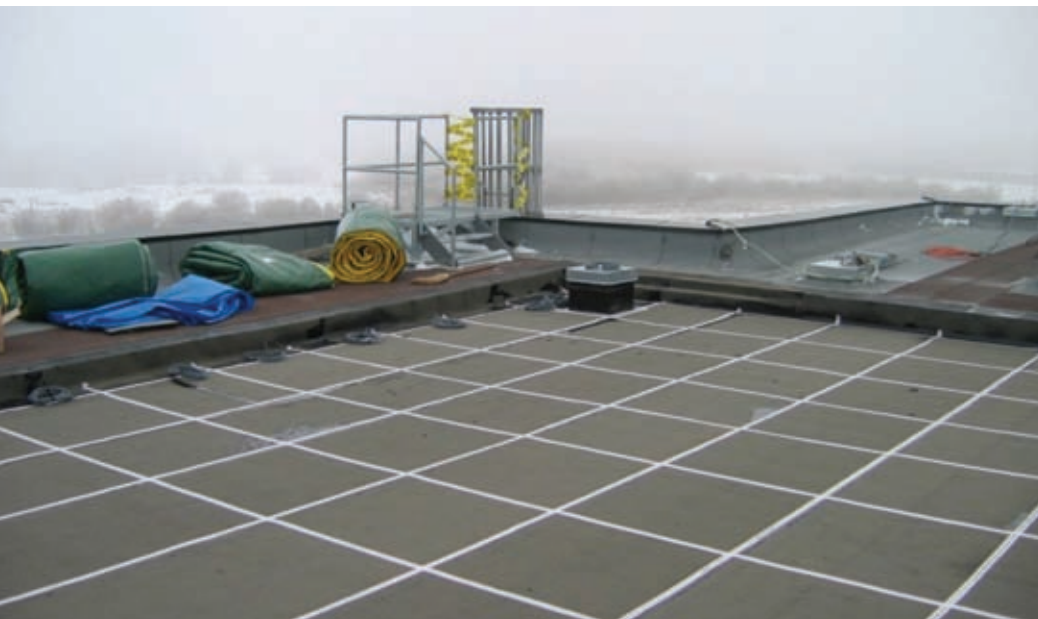
"There are many benefits of being part of the eureka project," added Mustapha. "Its location makes it easier to access resources and take advantage of the synergy created between the university and private industry located at Smartpark. There is also synergy between the companies in the incubator,

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– GAMAL MUSTAPHA, PRESIDENT OF SMT RESEARCH.

and the director who oversees the eureka project has a lot of experience and contacts to move products from conception to commercialization."

Opened in 2006, the eureka project is currently home to eight high-tech companies involved in research and development of nutraceuticals, airship technology, interactive learning resources and software. The incubator provides expert feedback from the business community, networking events, flexible space options, IT support, intellectual property advice from the university's Technology Transfer Office, and hands-on assistance with developing business, financing, and marketing plans.

Smartpark is an initiative supported by WD. For information on the eureka project, visit www.eurekaproject.ca. ■



Roof installation of SMT's moisture detection and monitoring system.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SMT RESEARCH, LTD.