



New cold business in Hot Springs

By Sandra Kirk, Fox 16 News

HOT SPRINGS, AR -- There is a new cold breeze to beat a hot day in Hot Springs. It's called Ice House America and Little Rock entrepreneur Scott Perry brought it to Arkansas.

"We decided to put it in Hot Springs because Hot Springs has the demographics and a dynamic outdoor recreation venue," Perry says.

The whole set up is pretty straightforward. The Ice House manufactures, stores, and distributes ice to the consumer. Just take a dollar bill and select bulk ice or bagged ice.

"If they select bagged ice, they get a sixteen pound bag, if they select bulk ice, they come over here to the chute and it fills the cooler up with ice," Perry says.

Seeing how it works up-close is interesting as well. Perry took us inside the cozy and cool quarters of the icehouse, where 6,500 pounds of ice are made every day, stored in a bin, and kept nice and cool.

"The temperature is kept at 34 degrees, if it were at 32 degrees, all of the ice would become one big chunk," Perry says.

The Ice House opened on Friday in Hot Springs. There are currently two locations. Perry plans to open 25 in central Arkansas, and then sell 75 more statewide over the next four years. For drivers like Jon Hall, on his way to Lake Hamilton, it's a great idea come to life.

"It's the best thing I've seen in a longtime. It's quite a contraption, I would never expect to see an self-serve ice machine along the side of the road," Hall said.

The Ice House may look like old fashioned assembly line manufacturing, but it is also very high-tech. There is wireless technology up above, an antenna to track how many bags of ice you've sold if you own a machine.