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and other organizations collaborated to celebrate the global Earth Hour event, focusing on energy conservation and fighting climate change. Many of our residents enjoyed a successful star-gazing presentation at Christ the King Catholic Secondary School. Local businesses took part by helping to spread the message about Earth Hour. Everyone's participation was valuable," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Earth Hour 2011 marked the fourth time that Halton Hills participated. This year, the Town achieved an electricity reduction of about 1% or 0.52 megawatts. This is equivalent to the electricity needs of about 426 homes for an hour or nearly 8,700 60-watt light bulbs being powered for an hour. Since first participating in Earth Hour in 2008, the Town has saved enough electricity to power a total of about 15,500 homes for

According to the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), across Ontario, Earth Hour reduced electricity demand by 2.1% or 360 megawatts. This is equivalent to the average peak energy needs of Windsor or as similar sized city. In light of the lower electricity savings when compared to previous years, the IESO noted that, "Energy conservation has become a year-round commitment for many Ontarians, and we're starting to see reductions in the demand for electricity."

To celebrate Earth Hour, the following initiatives were implemented by the Town:

(R)

• All non-essential lights at all Town facilities were

turned off during Earth Hour, without jeopardizing public safety and security, and interrupting regular

- \$100 on their natural gas and water bills every year. Refreshments were donated by Saputo.
- Town facilities and local businesses promoted Earth Hour to their employees and customers. Some restaurants, for example, offered candlelight dinners
- On Friday March, all Town facilities participated in an mini-Earth Hour celebration between noon and 2 p.m. as many of the facilities were closed during the

Town staff to reduce energy use resulted in a 50 per cent decline in consumption when compared to the same time on Thursday March 24.

hour and throughout the year, a draw was held for an "energy-efficiency" prize package.

Worldwide, a record 134 countries and territories took part in Earth Hour. Across Canada, over 420 com-

Earth Hour is a symbolic event and it alone will not reverse climate change. Therefore, this year, take steps to go beyond the hour, by embracing a green lifestyle throughout the year.

and www.haltonhillshvrdo.com

Once again, the Town, residents, businesses, schools service.

• In partnership with Christ the King Catholic Secondary School and Halton Hills Hydro, the Town hosted a free and fun "Star Gazing Event" during Earth Hour. About 150 residents attended this successful event, more than double the number the last time when this event was held. Attendees enjoyed an informative and engaging indoor presentation of the solar system followed by an outdoor star viewing session using large telescopes. Union Gas was on site providing free energy savings kits. These kits save homeowners

and Earth Hour menu specials.

official Earth Hour which took place on March 26. For example, at the Civic Centre, actions taken by

• To encourage Earth Hour participation during the

munities participated, an increase of 38 per cent.

For useful conservation tips, visit www.haltonhills.ca/sustainability

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