

EARTH WEEK

Special pullout section, TUESDAY, April 13, 2010

Town leads by example during Earth Week activities

By DAMIAN SZYBALSKI

Sustainability Coordinator, Town of Halton Hills

April 2010 will mark the 40th anniversary of Earth Day celebrations. Today, Earth Day serves as a high-profile global opportunity to elevate environmental matters such as climate change, waste management and natural heritage preservation to the forefront.

As part of the Town's Earth Week celebrations, which this year include events held at the Robert C. Austin Operations Centre, the Georgetown Market Place and the Devereaux House, the Town is committed to leading by example.

Doing so was important considering that, as a major local employer, the Town's operations, programs and policies have an important influence on the community's sustainability. That is, the Town recognizes that while local municipalities stand to gain from the benefits of sustainability (e.g. reduced water demand, energy efficiency, waste reduction, staff retention and an improved quality of life), they are simultaneously at the forefront of being faced with the negative impacts of inaction if sustainability is not pursued as a priority.

Recognizing this, under the leadership of the Town's Staff Sustainability Team, composed of staff from all Town departments committed to greening the Town's corporate operations, a celebration will be held after the 22 Minute Makeover on Thursday, April 22 for all participating Town staff at the Civic Centre. This event will engage and inspire Town staff to be champions for sustainability, helping to continue a paradigm shift whereby sustainability is seamlessly integrated into the Town's everyday decisions.

As in past years, there should be much to celebrate! Why? Each year, about 100 Town staff participate in the Makeover. In 2009 alone, Town staff collected about 90 bags of garbage. These 90 bags of garbage were then properly disposed of, helping to make our community litter-free.

This year, after helping to beautify local neighbourhoods, streets and parks, Town staff will celebrate Earth Day at the Civic Centre. This event will highlight the amount of litter collected by Town



Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, Town of Halton Hills Sustainability Coordinator Damian Szybalski and Wards 3 & 4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal display the energy saving kit available.

Photo by Ted Brown

staff and recognize participating staff. As part of the event, each Town department will share information on select environmental initiatives.

In addition, in keeping with the theme of Earth Day, the Town's celebratory event will reinforce the importance of water and energy conservation. Participating staff will receive Energy Savings Kits, generously provided by Union Gas.

Each kit includes an energy-efficient showerhead, a kitchen aerator, a bathroom aerator, teflon tape

and water pipe insulation. Installing each Energy Savings Kit can save as much as \$100 annually in energy costs. The Energy Saving Kits are available free-of-charge year round to Halton Hills residents.

The Kits can be obtained by contacting Union Gas or by visiting www.uniongas.com/esk. Courtesy of Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation, a draw will also be held for a 'gardening gift basket' to promote local food production and gardening.

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280 Guelph Street,
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Georgetown

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