

Businesses encouraged to take part

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Szybalski has had just over a month to make plan to put Halton Hills in the dark. During that hour, the Town will be turning off as many lights as possible without jeopardizing public safety.

The lights will be off in a number of areas, including:

- Civic Centre (with one parking lot light left on for security)
- Eighth Line pathway between Maple Avenue and the Gellert Centre
- Durham Street Park walkway
- Remembrance Park

Enter to win an energy efficient gift basket

You could win one of three energy efficient gift baskets from the Town of Halton Hills and Halton Hills Hydro.

Each basket contains energy efficient light bulbs, a ceiling fan, an energy meter, a golf shirt and a certificate for a programmable thermostat and its installation.

To enter, be one of the first 300 Halton Hills residents to register for Earth Hour at www.wwf.ca/EarthHour and e-mail the Town of Halton Hills at damiens@haltonhills.ca to let them know you will be participating and what you plan to do for the hour.

Deadline for entries is noon on Saturday, March 29.

- Acton and Georgetown indoor pools (only entry lights will be left on)

- Prospect Park and Cedarvale leash-free zones

- Outdoor ice rinks at the Georgetown Fairgrounds and Sir Donald Mann Park

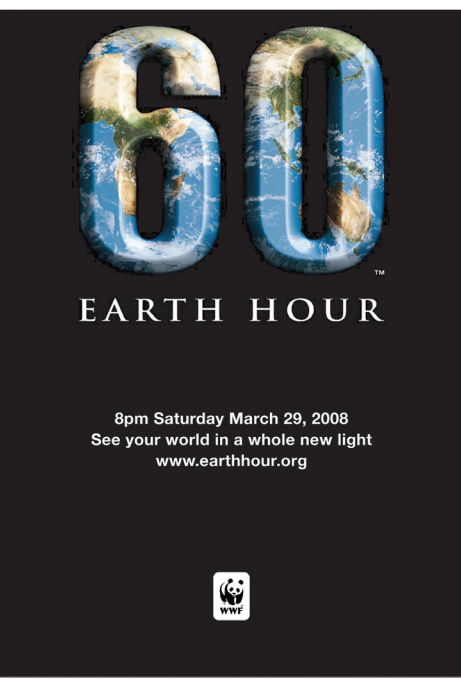
Some local businesses have also been encouraging people to turn out the lights for Earth Hour.

Debbie Smart, the manager at Wastewise, has put up posters and notices around the building

to encourage customers to participate. Wastewise will be closed and have its lights off on Saturday night, but Smart is doing what she can to let others know. She has used e-mail and Facebook to let her personal and professional contacts know about the event.

"If everybody participates, maybe it'll make a difference," Smart says.

Shelly Silk, the owner of Alexandre's Gifts, is raising awareness for Earth Hour in her end of town. She has been putting up posters around her business in the Georgetown South plaza. She is also encouraging her staff and customers to turn off their lights that night.



"It might not seem like turning off the lights is a big deal," Silk says. "But if a lot of people do it, it is a big deal. It will make a difference."

Alexandre's will be closed on Saturday night, but Silk plans to celebrate Earth Hour at home. She is hoping to organize a games night with her teenage children.

"Just because the hydro is off, you can still have fun. You don't have to go to bed," she says.

Szybalski hopes the residents of

Halton Hills will follow Silk's lead and plan activities for Earth Hour. He is also encouraging residents to register at www.wwf.ca/EarthHour and to e-mail him at damiens@haltonhills.ca so he will have an accurate idea of how many people are participating.

Even though Earth Hour hasn't happened yet, Silk is already making plans for next year. She hopes to have a special Earth Hour sale at her store for next year's event.

"We'll do it the old-fashioned way," she says. "We'll write out receipts by hand, accept cash only and use candles for light."

Fire Marshal's Office says to play it safe during Earth Hour

Remember to be safe during Earth Hour. The Fire Marshal of Ontario recommends that you use flashlights and battery-powered lanterns during the hour of darkness on Saturday night. If you do use candles, the Fire Marshal recommends the following safety precautions:

- Use sturdy candleholders. Ones with glass shades or chimneys are best
- Keep candles safely away from anything that can burn
- Keep candles and matches away from children
- Do not leave a lit candle unattended. If you leave a room, blow out the candle

Szybalski is also making plans for next year. He hopes to get more businesses involved and to encourage local restaurants to offer special candlelit dinners during Earth Hour. He is also thinking about organizing a street festival for that night.

"The hope is that Earth Hour will bring awareness to saving electricity," he says. "Don't just do this for an hour. Have Earth Hour every day."

For more information on Earth Hour visit www.earthhour.org or www.wwf.ca/EarthHour.



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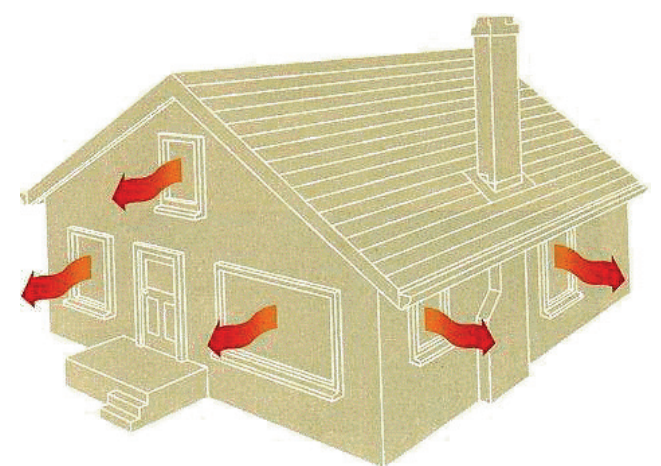
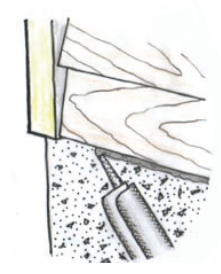
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