

The Greening of Municipalities

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AMM turns *green*



By Lynne Bereza,
AMM Communications Coordinator

The AMM is committed

to recycling and reducing waste wherever possible, and we know our members are too. That is why we are continually searching for ways to become better stewards of the environment. We are pleased to say that over the past year we have implemented a number of waste reduction initiatives that, due to the nature of our organization, have had effects across Manitoba.

Perhaps the biggest change we made was to implement a set of guidelines for recycling and waste reduction at AMM events (see sidebar). We encourage our members to follow these guidelines when hosting AMM meetings (such as June Districts and Mayors, Reeves and CAOs) in their communities. We follow the guidelines ourselves for larger events such as the Municipal Officials Seminar and the Annual Convention. This has made a huge impact on the amount of waste created and disposed of whenever we gather with our members!

But our events are not the only place where the AMM has tried to act more environmentally responsible – we walk the talk in our office, too. Here's what we've done so far:

- Installed programmable thermostats that automatically adjust the temperature when the office is closed.
- Installed sensor lights in all offices.
- Changed all office lighting to Manitoba Hydro-recommended bulbs that use less electricity and last up to eight times longer than light bulbs previously used.



- Implemented recycling programs for:
 - Office paper
 - Household recyclables (news-paper, magazines, phone books, cardboard, plastic containers, glass containers, aluminum and metal cans, aseptic containers)
 - Toner cartridges
- Installed a hand dryer in the ladies restroom – but not just any hand dryer. The XLERATOR® has been awarded

GreenSpec® designation by the editors of Environmental Building News. It conserves energy, has low maintenance requirements and reduces waste. It also qualifies for LEED® credits!

- Purchased a kitchen compost pail. All coffee filters/grounds, tea bags, and fruit and vegetable scraps are collected and taken home by a staff person who adds the materials to her back yard composter each week.
- Purchased enough reusable plates and cutlery to ensure no paper or plastic need be used, even on busy meeting days.
- Purchased office paper with at least 30% recycled content whenever possible.
- Installed a timer for outdoor signage.
- Printed the 2007 annual report on 100% recycled paper.

As always, we'd like to hear from our members – what are *you* doing in your municipal offices to reduce waste and save energy? Do you have any ideas to share with other AMM members? Let us know and we will print them in the next issue of the Leader! 🌱

Recycling & Waste Reduction at AMM Events

Most communities in Manitoba have long-standing, successful community recycling programs. It only makes sense that when an AMM meeting takes place in your community, we practice good 3 R's behavior – by reducing, reusing, *and* recycling.

Following the guidelines below will help us to meet our environmental goals, and result in less waste being sent to your landfill after the meeting:

1. Please ensure that no disposable cutlery or plates are used.
2. Please do not use Styrofoam.
3. Cream should be served in a pitcher, rather than individual creamers.
4. Likewise, sugar should be served in a bowl, or in cubes, rather than individual packets.
5. Try to avoid disposable napkins and use linen where possible.
6. Many recent studies suggest municipally treated water is equal or higher in quality than bottled water. In addition, bottled water containers are made of plastic, which must be recycled. We strongly suggest serving water in pitchers, with glassware rather than plastic glasses.
7. If bottled water must be served, please provide adequate recycling bins, clearly marked (one bin per 50 attendees is adequate.)
8. If soft drinks are to be served, please provide adequate recycling bins, clearly marked.
9. Please provide clear recycling instructions to meeting participants early in the day.

Reducing waste and practicing good recycling behavior is everyone's responsibility.

We appreciate the efforts of our members towards making AMM meetings "GREEN"!

Meet Your Provincial Department

Manitoba Science, Technology, Energy and Mines – Climate and Green Initiatives Branch

Submitted by the Province of Manitoba

The province's Climate and Green Initiatives Branch – part of Manitoba Science, Technology, Energy and Mines – co-ordinates the government's strategic framework for a green, prosperous, growing province. Like Green Manitoba, the Green and Growing strategy is the basis of the branch's operations.

Climate and Green Initiatives develops, facilitates and co-ordinates climate change and green initiatives throughout the government. The branch promotes awareness of climate change issues, develops provincial climate change programs and funds opportunities for climate change action. It works with the government and communities to develop green initiatives that have economic, environmental and social benefits. The branch also supports research into climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In 2002, Canada ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which sets a target for achieving a six per cent reduction from 1990 greenhouse gas levels, by 2012. Manitoba has committed to working with citizens, communities and businesses to meet this target. It will make our province the first jurisdiction in Canada to meet a legislated Kyoto target by 2012. Manitoba recently solidified its position by passing *The Climate Change and Emissions Reduction Act*, which commits the province to meeting this target.

The act is supported by Beyond Kyoto, Manitoba's updated climate change action plan, which was released in April 2008. This plan and legislation are supported by more than \$145 million in investments over four years. There are 60 specific actions to reduce greenhouse gases, including:

- Introducing a coal-reduction strategy. A tax on coal emissions will be in effect. Capital support will be available for coal-reliant industries to convert to cleaner energy and the province



In 2002, Canada ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which sets a target for achieving a six per cent reduction from 1990 greenhouse gas levels, by 2012.

will support development of a coal alternative, biomass.

- Investing in public transportation, including continuing to pay half of transit's net operating costs, including rapid transit.
- Taking action on Manitoba's largest greenhouse gas emitters, including capturing methane in large landfills. Manitoba Hydro's coal-fired electricity plant in Brandon will be closed, except to support emergency operations. The province will work with the City of Winnipeg and Manitoba Hydro on a business plan for Brady Landfill.
- Encouraging greener cars and trucks. The province will expand the use of low-carbon fuels and establish a Vehicle Standards Advisory Board to make recommendations for a provincial standard for new vehicles.
- Implementing programs to reduce the number of inefficient automobiles on the road, develop "green driving" outreach programs and support new, efficient trucking technologies.
- Providing alternative transportation choices for consumers. Highway traffic laws will be updated to ensure that low-speed electric vehicles can be sold and driven in Manitoba. The province will continue to offer a consumer rebate for the purchase of hybrid and electric vehicles.
- Expanding clean energy actions, including energy efficiency initia-

tives and the further development of hydro, wind and geothermal energy.

- Supporting agriculture, forestry and community programs, including a new sustainable agriculture program. New programs will help municipalities track emissions, reduce waste and conserve energy and water. Also, the province will plant five million trees over the next five years.
- Partnering with other provinces, the United States and other jurisdictions. The province and our partners strive to share best practices, fund new research and innovation opportunities and meet broader, regional targets such as those set by the Western Climate Initiative.

Here are more actions the province is taking on climate change:

Manitoba is working with communities, businesses and Manitoba Hydro to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We are investing in knowledge, promoting technological development and innovation, and encouraging action in all sectors of the provincial economy.

Manitoba is recognized as a national leader in energy efficiency. All new buildings that receive public money will be required to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system. New energy requirements for commercial buildings will be introduced. Also, a dedicated fund is supporting energy



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efficiency and related employment and training for low-income and First Nations communities in our province.

Manitoba has become a North American leader on ground source heat pump (geothermal) installations. These pumps provide the lowest-cost heating and cooling systems on the continent to thousands of Manitoba homes and businesses.

Ethanol production has grown from 10 million to 130 million litres due, in part, to Manitoba's biofuels mandate and tax incentives. The building of new, community based biodiesel plants has contributed to our communities' economy and job growth.



The Town of St. Léon is the centre of a major construction project to create one of the largest wind energy farms in Canada, with 100 megawatts of wind power being produced. The goal is to produce 1,000 megawatts over the next 10 years. When completed, the project will supply enough clean energy to power all the households in Portage la Prairie and Morden combined. This \$210 million project will have a major economic impact on the region, including creating 300 direct and indirect jobs.

Cities are adopting made-in-Manitoba biodiesel and testing hybrid buses in their transit fleets. Also, Manitoba is reducing transportation emissions through low-emission vehicle incentives, encouraging new technologies, such as plug-in hybrid cars, and continuing investments in public transportation and biking and walking trails. **L**

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“Green and Growing”

with Green Manitoba

Submitted by the Province of Manitoba

Manitoba takes action

to protect our environment, while paying close attention to the economic potential of its green efforts for our communities. The province believes there are tremendous economic opportunities for green initiatives, especially considering Manitoba's rich abundance of natural resources.

In 2005, the government solidified its long-term environmental sustainability objectives in its *Green and Growing* document. To help implement the strategies introduced in the report, Green Manitoba was created as a Special Operating Agency in April 2006.

Formed from combined components of Manitoba Conservation and Manitoba Science, Technology, Energy and Mines, Green Manitoba partners with communities to develop programs that will economically benefit the communities, while protecting the environment and reducing waste.

Through leadership and collaboration, Green Manitoba supports and guides environmentally sound community practices in three key areas:

- **Waste reduction.** The agency works with its partners to reduce solid waste disposal and to encourage efficient use of materials.
- **Water conservation.** Green Manitoba works to preserve adequate, reliable and sustainable supplies of fresh water.
- **Energy efficiency.** The agency encourages decreased energy consumption and works to mitigate climate change.

The following initiatives demonstrate the nature of activities undertaken by Green Manitoba.

Waste Management

The demand for improved recycling and waste management systems is growing

in Manitoba. Residential recycling, for example, rose six per cent since last year, and total recycling levels exceed 67,000 tonnes. Green Manitoba is developing a producer-responsibility model as a long-term solution for effective management of electronic waste (e-waste), household hazardous waste and blue-box materials. This follows the successful launch of Tire Stewardship Manitoba in April 2008. Improved waste management and organic waste diversion practices have significant effects in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which benefit all our communities.

Consumer demand for electronics waste recycling services continues to grow. Manitoba's 2007 Electronic Waste Roundup diverted more than 305,000 kg (675,000 lbs.) of electronic waste from provincial landfills. A follow-up program is underway, and will end in September 2008. More collection sites have been added this year, and in more communi-



“The province believes there are tremendous economic opportunities for green initiatives, especially considering Manitoba's rich abundance of natural resources.”

ties, such as Swan River and The Pas. In total, 25 locations, spanning 22 communities, offer e-waste collection services this summer. To date, more than 10 semi-truckloads of residential electronics have been shipped for end-of-life processing.

Green Schools Initiative

This initiative works with public school divisions and some independent schools, to fund improvements to energy and water efficiency and to reduce waste in schools.

Green Schools provides many ways for schools to be involved in sustainable practices. For example, the program helps schools enhance their natural grounds, encourages teaching the importance of sustainability to students and works to connect school activities with local sustainability efforts.

The initiative recognizes and showcases the ongoing environmental efforts of our schools. It welcomes innovative proposals from schools and encourages new thinking and planning about sustainability.

Green Building Award

Brandon's new Green Building Award was developed through partnership with Green Manitoba and Brandon's Environmental Steering Committee. The award recognizes innovators in green building construction in Brandon and promotes local green building projects. This year's award was presented to the Kelleher Ford car dealership.

Additional Green Manitoba initiatives on the horizon include:

Small Commercial Program

Many large-scale retrofit incentives that are offered by utilities and governments do not apply, or may not be practical, for small business owners. Green Manitoba is developing a program and conducting market research to help small business owners improve waste management and help businesses save energy and water.

Water Conservation

Water conservation has become an important issue because of increased demand for potable water. Green Manitoba believes in working together with local businesses, government and individuals to conserve and protect our water resources. Green Manitoba is currently working with stakeholders to develop and implement a water efficiency program, which will initially focus on helping homeowners conserve water.

Municipal Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Baseline

"Up to half of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions (38 MTs) are under the direct control or influence of Municipal Governments." - Federation of Canadian Municipalities


Green Manitoba and its partners are exploring an initiative to provide tools, resources and knowledge to communities to aid in: gathering baseline information on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, predicting future emissions trends, and facilitating long-term planning and decision making for local action plans.

The government's Green and Growing agenda places a high priority on actions to enhance sustainable practices and reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout Manitoba.



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throughout Manitoba."*

Gathering community GHG and energy baseline information is a critical first step in helping communities set targets for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. Information gathering also helps communities measure and report their reduction achievements. These efforts will help communities meet the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' eligibility requirements for Green Municipal funding.

Green Manitoba looks forward to working with all stakeholders on many additional initiatives to help build a green and prosperous future for Manitoba communities. 



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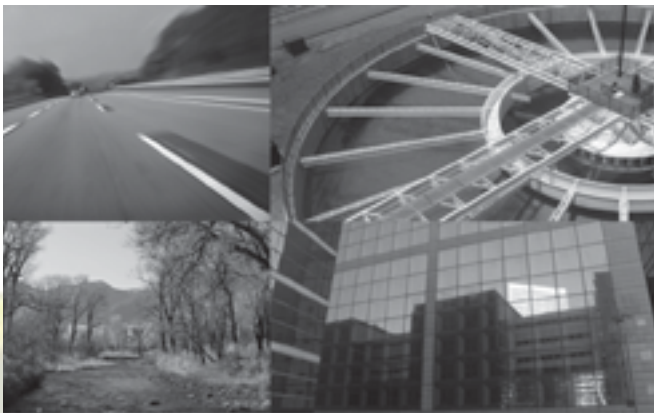
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RM at the heart of a unique environmental partnership

By Keystone Agricultural Producers

The RM of Blanshard is home to two major communities and about 700 people, but may one day be known as the birthplace of a nation-wide agricultural conservation program. With the support of governments, farmers and a forward-thinking municipal council, this RM launched the first Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) pilot project in Canada in 2005.

Since then, ALUS has provided an opportunity for farmers to evaluate their farms and become actively involved in identifying lands that create environmental benefits. A payment is then provided to farmers who have signed a contract to provide these services to the public.

Innovative leadership from farmers, a municipality, conservationists, and governments had moved ALUS forward to this stage. Evaluation is still under way, but results from the first two years are very promising.

Over 70% of eligible landowners in the RM participated in ALUS, a rate that is unheard of in any other conservation program in Canada. Of those that participated, about half had never participated in a conservation program before – which means that ALUS was successful in reaching a new audience. Those that participated signed contracts to maintain or enhance their environmentally significant acres, including wetlands, riparian buffers, grasslands or wooded areas, and other ecologically sensitive lands.

Part of the reason for these successes has been the involvement and leadership shown by local people. An ALUS project manager working through the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District worked as the first point of contact for farmers. The municipal council was also strongly supportive of moving ALUS forward, and even invested money over the course of the three-year pilot project. **Roy Greer**, a local councillor and member of the project's management committee often explains that their commitment was an easy decision: Their \$120,000 share triggered nearly \$1 million of investment in the region over the course of the project.

The impact of the ALUS project in Blanshard is being closely watched by agricultural organizations, conservation groups, and governments across the country. Another pilot project is taking place in Norfolk County in Ontario, where demonstration farms are highlighting environmental services that could be part of a full ALUS program. The government of Prince Edward Island recently announced a province-wide ALUS program that will help them to reach their environmental goals. Other pilot projects are also under development in Saskatchewan and Alberta, all based on unique local partnerships.

The ALUS research project receives its funding from the Advancing Canadian Agriculture & Agri-Food program, Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives (MAFRI), the Delta Waterfowl Foundation, the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council,



(L-R) MAFRI Minister Rosann Wowchuk, KAP President Ian Wishart, and Delta Waterfowl VP Robert Sopuck participated in the ALUS tour in the RM of Blanshard.

“ALUS has provided an opportunity for farmers to evaluate their farms and become actively involved in identifying lands that create environmental benefits.”

and the RM of Blanshard, with technical expertise provided by Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District, MAFRI, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada - Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. The ALUS concept was initially developed by Keystone Agricultural Producers and is being administered by the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation.

For more information about ALUS, contact the KAP office at (204) 697-1140 or communications@kap.mb.ca. Information is also posted online at www.kap.mb.ca/alus.btm and www.deltawaterfowl.org/alus. 

FCM's Green Municipal Fund



Andrew Cowan, Senior Manager,
FCM Centre for Sustainable Community Development

When the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) partnered with the federal government to create the Green Municipal Fund eight years ago, they were fueling the leading edge of an environmental sustainability wave.

"A lot has changed in eight years," commented Winnipeg Councillor and FCM Past President **Gord Steeves**, "back then there were just a few communities at the forefront, but now nearly everyone is working to make their cities and towns more sustainable."

FCM's Green Municipal Fund (GMF) has been a key resource supporting that change.

The Government of Canada endowed FCM with \$550 million to establish GMF to provide a long-term, sustainable source of financing for municipal governments and their partners. The Fund provides low-interest loans and grants, builds capacity, and shares knowledge to support municipal governments and their partners in developing communities that are more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. To ensure the greatest possible impact, GMF invests in the best examples of municipal leadership in sustainable development – examples that can be replicated in other communities.

GMF funding is complemented by a capacity building program, which shares the knowledge and experience municipal leaders gain from GMF-funded initiatives. It informs, inspires and supports municipal



"GMF offers Manitoba municipalities with leading initiatives a unique funding resource and I would encourage all municipalities to take a look at what it can offer."

- AMM President Ron Bell

governments to implement environmental sustainability projects and practices.

Since the inception of GMF in 2000, FCM has committed more than \$460 million in grants and low-interest loans to support nearly 800 leading projects. These GMF-supported initiatives are leveraging almost \$2.4 billion of economic activity in nearly 350 communities across Canada, over one third of those communities are small, rural and remote municipalities.

In Manitoba, municipal governments from Morris in the south, Virden in the west, to the Interlake and beyond have been able to take advantage of GMF grants for sustainable community plans, feasibility studies and field tests, and low interest loans combined with grants for capital projects.

GMF grants for studies can be used to help fuel progress toward solutions in more difficult areas of municipal programming and service delivery. GMF low interest loans, or low interest loans combined with grants, are then available to implement those solutions.

"With effective interest rates that are often below 2%," says Steeves, "there is really no competition for borrowing." On a \$1 million loan over 10 years, that preferred rate can translate into over \$100,000 in savings.

FCM is increasing its focus on sharing the results and lessons from GMF-funded initiatives. To improve the value of that sharing, GMF is invested in initiatives that will produce useful lessons that apply to a broader number of communities.

By strategically allocating funds to the best projects and studies, and sharing the resulting lessons and expertise, FCM can provide direct support to an even greater number of communities. The Federation can continually push the leading edge of the growing sustainability wave while simultaneously broadening the impact of the Fund beyond those municipalities that receive direct financing.

GMF supports a number of related programs that help elected officials and municipal staff members set and meet their sustainability goals: Partners for

Capacity Building Webinars

FCM's Green Municipal Fund is also about capacity building and providing resources, including webinars and E-learning. Webinars are interactive, web-based workshops that are accessible to a wide range of communities since there is no travel or cost required.

Some recent past webinar topics include:

- *Set your sites on creative communities: the role of abandoned sites in stimulating economic development and community regeneration*
- *How Can the Ecological Footprint Tool Work for My Municipality?*
- *Greening City Hall: Policy Development for Municipal Green Buildings*

For more information and to view past webinars, visit:
www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/Webinars/

Climate Protection, the Sustainable Communities Mission, the bi-annual Sustainable Communities Conference, the FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Awards and a popular online “webinar” series. Information about these and other programs are available through the FCM Centre for Sustainable Community development website: www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca.

As more and more communities adopt sustainability as a solution to promote cost savings, higher quality of life and better environmental management, FCM has adapted GMF to meet the growing demand. FCM has begun making new

improvements and adjustments to GMF based on input from villages, towns and cities across the country. Over the past year, for example, FCM has consulted extensively with leaders in brownfield remediation to modify the way projects are financed. Starting in July 2008, brownfield projects will be able to access low interest loans at any time of the year. Those loans will be disbursed at the remediation stage, when financing is otherwise more difficult to secure.

A similar consultation resulted in changes to grants and loans for sustainable transportation projects; the scope of

eligible projects has been increased and application timelines lengthened to allow greater flexibility.

FCM is also working to shorten decision time so that GMF applicants can confirm financing quicker, and to extend timelines to make it easier for municipal governments to prepare their applications.

As municipal governments continue to raise the sustainability bar with innovative, leading-edge studies and projects, GMF continues to evolve to keep pace with municipal leadership, and remains a valuable asset to communities across Canada. ■

Federation of Canadian Municipalities honours municipal excellence

Winners of FCM’s 2008 FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Awards were honoured May 31 at a recognition ceremony during the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ (FCM) 71st Annual Conference and Municipal Expo™ in Québec City.

Since 2000, FCM and CH2M HILL Canada Limited have recognized municipal governments across Canada with Sustainable Community Awards for leadership in environmental excellence and innovation in service delivery.

“FCM congratulates all the winners of the 2008 Sustainable Community Awards,” said **Gord Steeves**. “Each of the winners is helping to improve the quality of life for people in their communities. They are contributing creative and practical solutions to some of the critical issues of the environment and sustainable development the world faces today.”

The Awards are open to all municipal governments and their private sector partners. To be eligible, projects must have been completed within two years of the date of application, or be in the final stages of implementation, and must have achieved measurable results. Submissions are judged by an expert panel of judges.

Award winners

Winners of the 2008 FCM-CH2M HILL Sustainable Community Awards are:

- 1. Buildings:** City of Toronto, Ontario: *Arenas Energy Retrofit Project*
- 2. Energy:** City of Saint John, New Brunswick: *Municipal Energy Efficiency Program*
- 3. Planning:** City of Pickering, Ontario: *The Sustainable City Project*

- 4. Residential Development:** City of Kitchener, Ontario: *The Intowns*
- 5. Transportation:** Regional Municipality of Durham, Regional Municipality of Halton, City of Hamilton, City of Mississauga, Regional Municipality of Peel, City of Toronto, Regional Municipality of York, Ontario: *Smart Commute Initiative*
- 6. Water:** Regional Municipality of Peel, Ontario: *Water Efficiency Plan*
- 7. Waste:** Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville and Township of King, Ontario: *The Northern 6 Joint Waste Collection Contract and Green Bin (SSO) Launch Project*

- 8. Wastewater:** City of Québec, Québec: *Restoration of the Saint Charles river bank and the development of a linear park*

The FCM’s Green Municipal Fund and CH2M HILL Canada Ltd. are the primary sponsors of the Sustainable Community Awards.

For additional information, contact: **Green Municipal Fund and the Affordability and Choice Today (ACT) program:** www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca

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Through **ecoENERGY for Buildings and Houses** (www.ecoaction.gc.ca/buildings), you can access training and workshops, free software such as EE4 and RETScreen®, and technical publications, case studies and newsletters. The program supports the update of the *Model National Energy Code for Buildings* (MNECB) and is working with provinces and territories to develop a voluntary energy labelling system for buildings. If you are designing a new building or addition that is at least 25% better than the current MNECB, you can apply for a validation from NRCan. The department promotes financing options such as energy performance contracting and best practices such as building optimization (commissioning and re-commissioning). Collaboration with stakeholder associations, utilities and service providers is also a strong component.

A financial incentive, **ecoENERGY Retrofit – Small and Medium Organizations** (www.ecoaction.gc.ca/retrofit), helps improve buildings that are 20,000 square metres or less. After performing a pre-project energy audit and completing the application forms, your municipality could be eligible for the lesser of \$10 per gigajoule of estimated annual energy savings or 25% of project costs. The maximum incentive is \$50,000 per project and \$250,000 per organization over the life of the program.

Another incentive, **ecoENERGY for Renewable Heat** (www.ecoaction.gc.ca/beat) offers 25% of purchase, instal-




“NRCan collaborates with associations, utilities and service providers to offer improved energy efficiency in new and existing municipal buildings.”



lation and certain other costs for qualifying solar air and water heating systems, up to \$80,000 per installation.

If your municipality is applying for either of these incentives from NRCan, it is important you do not incur costs until you receive a signed *Contribution Agreement*. As well, you can also apply for complementary incentives from energy utilities, other orders of government and from the

Federation of Canadian Municipalities' **Green Municipal Fund** (see page 32) (www.sustainablecommunities.fcm.ca/GMF).

For more information on Government of Canada programs after visiting the ecoACTION Web sites above, please contact the Office of Energy Efficiency at www.oe.nrcan.gc.ca/buildings/contact or call 1-877-360-5500. 

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Communities going green:

10 ways to make it real

Randall McQuaker, Resource Conservation Manitoba

Amid media hype and high public expectations, local governments are moving forward with environmental action plans. **Randall McQuaker** from the non-profit group Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM) takes a look at who's doing what in Manitoba and across Canada.

Two striking conclusions emerge from even a quick survey of local environmental initiatives in Manitoba and other provinces. First, the range of what is being done is truly impressive. Communities are taking on critical challenges around waste, pollution, climate change, energy efficiency and more. And they are doing so using a variety of tools and approaches aimed at reducing the ecological footprint of local services and operations.

Second, practical steps are being taken in communities of varying sizes, not just larger cities. Clearly, people in all parts of the country increasingly expect municipal governments to take their environmental responsibilities seriously. Decision-makers know they must respond.

Following is a snapshot of community environmental initiatives in Manitoba and elsewhere.

(1) **Idle-free**

Over 100 communities across Canada have implemented campaigns to reduce vehicle idling. In Manitoba, Stonewall and Morden-Winkler are among the leaders. Brandon's Environmental Steering Committee has promoted a move to have idle-free signs posted at all schools in the city by next fall.

(2) **Green buildings**

Making efficient use of energy and resources is a key idea behind building green. The Province of Manitoba is currently reviewing options for standards that would apply to provincially-funded facilities. The planned PCU Centre in Portage la Prairie is aiming for LEED Silver. Elsewhere, Calgary



Winkler celebrates World Record Walk with 1,436 participants. Manitoba had the largest participation among provinces with 165 official walking events.

has a sustainable building policy committing to achieving LEED Gold standards in construction of new facilities and Silver for major renovations.

(3) **Landfill bans**

It has been 10 years since Nova Scotia moved to ban organics and recyclables from landfill. That's one of the factors in that province's nation-leading waste diversion rates. Selective restrictions are finding their way into practice in smaller centres in Manitoba. For example, the SWAMP regional transfer station (serving Stanley, Winkler and Morden) won't accept clean cardboard. That sends a strong recycling signal.

(4) **Plastic bags**

Leaf Rapids, Huntingdon (Quebec) and San Francisco are among the communities, large and small, that have taken steps to restrict the distribution of plastic grocery bags. In the big picture, plastic bags are not the most formidable barrier to a sustainable future. But their use in everyday life means they have symbolic value as well as practical impact. RCM favours an eco-fee with proceeds invested in community waste reduction education.

(5) **Composting**

Organics comprise about one-third of the residential waste stream. When sent to landfill, they produce methane in the

process of breaking down. Residential curbside pickup is available in Morden from beginning of May until the end of September for a fee. Ladysmith, BC also offers the service to residents. In Thunder Bay, collection of leaf and garden waste is free during a 10-day period in spring.

(6) Biking

It's easy, fast, healthy and non-polluting. Larger cities like Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal are putting resources into commuter cycling. And so are smaller centres like Ajax and Pickering in Ontario. The City of Winnipeg was a major supporter of the first-ever Bike to Work Day in Manitoba in June 2008. Cyclists point to the need for on-road infrastructure, so that cycling can be for transportation as well as a recreation.

(7) Waste fees

With recent figures from Statistics Canada showing Manitoba lagging in waste diversion, incentives like waste fees are getting a second look. It's an approach that has worked well in Selkirk and Portage la Prairie. Airdrie in Alberta and Owen Sound, ON, are among the hundred communities in Canada that have adopted various forms of "user pay" for waste.

(8) Pesticides

Growing concerns over the impact of exposure to synthetic chemical pesticides on human health, especially children's health, have prompted some communities to ban or limit the use of these substances. In Quebec, the restrictions are province-wide. In Manitoba, the cities of Brandon and Winnipeg have started to reflect public concern through bylaws. Morden has committed to use less toxic products for weed control in areas frequented by the public.

(9) Procurement

Local governments in Manitoba direct the spending of millions of dollars every year. For communities, green procurement means purchasing eco-friendly products that help reduce the environmental footprint of municipal operations. Bathurst, NB, and Waterloo, ON, have municipal policies. Manitoba's provincial government does, as well.

(10) Active transportation

Walkable communities are great for health, for business, and for the environment. Towns and cities need planning standards that make it safe, easy, attractive and convenient for people to walk and cycle. The City of Winnipeg commissioned a study of active transportation (AT) and has followed up by hiring an AT Co-ordinator and appointing an advisory committee.

There's much more to report – on energy retrofits, rain barrels, community gardens,

farmers markets, carpooling ... the list goes on. One inescapable take-away message – for municipalities across the country, sustainability is here to stay. **L**

Resource Conservation Manitoba is a non-profit group that promotes composting, waste reduction, sustainable transportation and resource conservation. For more information, visit www.resourceconservation.mb.ca or e-mail rcm@resourceconservation.mb.ca.

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LEED Canada

Rating System By AMM Staff

The Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC) manages LEED Canada for New Construction and Major Renovations, which is an adaptation of the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System (LEED). LEED Canada has been tailored specifically for Canadian climates, construction practices and regulations. LEED projects are in progress in 41 different countries including Brazil, Mexico and India.

There are four possible levels of certification – certified, silver, gold and platinum – which are rated by the CaGBC based on a point system of prerequisites and credits.

The prerequisites and credits are organized into the following five categories:

- **Sustainable Sites: Prerequisite** – erosion and sedimentation control. Points available for site selection, development density, redevelopment of contaminated sites, alternative transportation, reduced site disturbance, stormwater management, heat island effect, and light pollution reduction.
- **Water Efficiency:** Points available for water efficient landscaping, innovative wastewater technologies, and water use reduction.
- **Energy and Atmosphere: Prerequisites** – fundamental building systems commissioning, minimum energy performance, and CFC reduction in HVAC&R equipment. Points available for optimizing energy performance, renewable energy, best practice commissioning, ozone protection, measurement and verification, and green power.
- **Materials and Resources: Prerequisite** – storage and collection of recyclables. Points available for building reuse, construction waste management, resource reuse, recycled content, regional materials, rapidly renewable materials, certified wood, and durable building.



- **Indoor Environmental Quality: Prerequisites** – Minimum indoor air quality (IAQ) performance and environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) control. Points available for carbon dioxide monitoring, ventilation effectiveness, construction IAQ management plan, low-emitting materials, indoor chemical and pollutant source control, controllability of systems, thermal comfort, and daylight and views.

An additional category – **Innovation Design and Process** – addresses sustainable building expertise as well as design measures not covered under these five environmental categories.

The same point scale is used for all certification, and the higher the number of points a project earns, the higher its certification rating will be. As of April 2008, there are 100 completed LEED projects in Canada.

The CaGBC is in the process of updating the LEED Canada Green Building System to address existing as well as new buildings, include all building types, and streamline the process to lower costs and shorten the time required for certification. The actual certification is not changing and the set of criteria will be similar to that outlined above. Currently LEED Canada applies only to new construction of commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential buildings. New criteria will be available for homes, neighbourhood developments, core and shell commercial buildings, and existing buildings. Implementation of the new system will occur in phases and is expected to be completed by 2011.

For more information visit: www.cagbc.org.

Also, www.gov.mb.ca/greenbuilding provides access to Manitoba's Green Building Policy as well as resources and tools to help people comply with the policy.

Manitoba's "community-based" recycling success



Mike Fernandes, Senior Manager
Municipal Programs, MPSC

Here's some trivia for you: When did the first recycling program start in a Manitoba community? If you answered "long before any European settler arrived," you're probably correct, but the first organized and heavily promoted recycling program in Manitoba actually started sometime around WWII when all Canadians were encouraged to "scrap" their steel and other materials to support the war effort. (Tell that to your kids and grandchildren the next time they lecture you about reducing waste!)

Unfortunately, as the war years and the Great Depression faded into history, our society gradually lost its conservation ethic and we started to take our resources for granted. To a large degree, this continues today, but thankfully there are signs of a turnaround in our thinking and one day we may look back to the year 1995 as a key point in this turnaround.

At that time, after years of negotiation with municipalities and various other stakeholders, the Province of Manitoba introduced a regulation that created the Manitoba Product Stewardship Program and an independent, multi-stakeholder board, now called Manitoba Product Stewardship Corporation, to administer the system.

The original objective of the MPSP program was simple – it was designed to promote the expansion of Manitoba's recycling services for packaging and printed materials. It wasn't intended to influence aluminum mining practices in Bolivia, nor was it intended to reduce organic waste, hazardous wastes or any other wastes municipalities contend with. It was created with a very specific job in mind and it was provided a very specific revenue base consistent with that job description.

The MPSP framework was introduced as "an interim step" towards increased product stewardship and it certainly did



"The success of recycling in Manitoba has always and will always fall on the efforts of the residents, volunteers and leaders of our communities."

(and still does) have its critics. As discussions continue on how best to move past the "interim" approach, there is one element of the system that should not be overlooked in the quest to move towards a "greener" future, and that one element is the community-based approach that continues to deliver real and measurable results.

Before the MPSP framework was introduced there were recycling programs already in operation in all four corners of Manitoba including

Virden (west), Winkler (south), Steinbach (east), and even Churchill (north). Many of these early recycling efforts were funded through shaky and unpredictable markets for scrap materials and temporary, ad-hoc funding from various grants. Yet it was reported that these small local efforts were able to recycle approximately 5,000 tonnes of packaging and printed material per year. It may not seem like much today, but given the challenges these early programs faced, it's a testament to the will and efforts

