



The Daily Gleaner

GREEN MATTERS to the City of Fredericton

June 16, 2007

In 2000, the City of Fredericton joined Partners for Climate Protection (PCP), formalizing the City's long standing commitment to the environment. It's a trend that started in the 1990s when Fredericton was the first city in North America to switch to water-based traffic paint to reduce emissions. This was out-of-the-box thinking, even visionary. And, it was the catalyst for a whole series of environmental initiatives that followed over the next decade.

Momentum increased every year. And the focus shifted. City Hall was well on the way to getting its environmental act together. It was now time to involve the community. That's why, this week, the City launched the Green Matters campaign, a community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction strategy. Now, it's about educating, engaging and motivating residents at home, at work, at school and on the road.

The ultimate goal is to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from community sources by 6% by 2010. Should Fredericton achieve its 6% reduction goal, we could well be one of the first cities in Canada, and perhaps North America, to meet Kyoto emissions reduction targets.

What does that 6% reduction goal mean for you and for your neighbours? To understand the challenge, we have to know where GHG emissions come from. You and I generate GHGs when we drive, heat/cool and light our homes, run appliances, use water, and produce waste for the landfill. So, if you're going to be part of helping our community reach our goal, it means you need to take a closer look at where you're greenhouse gas emissions are coming from.

If recent national polls are accurate, we anticipate that the majority of Frederictonians will jump on board. Eight out of ten people are concerned about climate change. But, as we all know, concern doesn't always turn into action. Particularly, when the problem seems mammoth. And, when individuals feel powerless. So it's not surprising that polls suggest that most people believe the solution lies with governments. However, that notion is being challenged by the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, the nation's foremost environmental protection organization. A study released in recent weeks points to cities as the key factor in combating climate change. That's because, the report concluded, municipalities, have the power to legislate quickly, to enforce, and to deliver 'green' solutions.

We agree. That's why, here in Fredericton, we're gearing up to lead Canada in meeting Kyoto community GHG reduction targets. To do that, we need the 'green' power that can be unleashed by Fredericton's 55,000 citizens. That means we need YOU! Just think, if you replaced three regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, your household alone would save almost 1,000 lbs of CO₂ each year. Do the math. If Fredericton's 20,000 households did the same, CO₂ emissions in the City would be cut by 20,000,000 lbs annually. In the GHG emissions reduction world, little actions can have big impacts.

We are witnessing an explosion of interest in Fredericton – from households wanting to reduce their carbon footprint, to businesses becoming aware of the economics and profitability of being

'green.' The green revolution is already underway. And, it's happening from the ground up. You DO matter. You can have an impact.

On our *Green Matters* web site (www.greenmattersfredericton.com) you'll find everything you need to get started. And, if you've already started, you will find a myriad of sometimes surprising and innovative GHG emission reduction ideas to consider, both small and large changes you can make in your life to reduce your carbon footprint. And while you're there, sign up for Fredericton's Green Energy Challenge to monitor your own GHG emissions reduction progress. Check it out. Now's the time - join Fredericton's green revolution!

Green Matters is the first of a regular series of columns the Daily Gleaner has offered to run throughout the three-year duration of this campaign. Four regular guest columnists will keep you up to date on Climate Change, offer GHG emission reduction steps, challenge you, motivate you, and even sometime provoke you. This week's inaugural column was written by Sonya Hull, Consultant and City of Fredericton Project Manager for the Green Matters initiative.