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**Item No. 3**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**October 20, 2009**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
Phillip Townsend, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

**DATE:** 22 September 2009

**SUBJECT:** International Day of Climate Action

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### **INFORMATION REPORT**

#### **ORIGIN**

This report originates from staff.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 is the International Day of Climate Action.***

Organized by the 350.org coalition, the focus is the number 350. That is the level (in parts per million) that scientists agree is the safe upper limit for CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. In December, world leaders will meet in Copenhagen, Denmark to craft a new global treaty on cutting emissions. Awareness of the importance of this scientific level is important as the basis of these discussions.

In 2005, Halifax Regional Council approved a Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emission - Local Action Plan that stipulates that HRM reduce corporate GHG emission by 20% from 2002 levels by 2012.

The Province of Nova Scotia has similarly demonstrated its commitment to climate change action in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA), with a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emission at least 10% below 1990 levels by 2020.

The 350.org campaign is complimentary to HRM and provincial plans and commitments.

### ***Summit Magazine Leadership in Green Procurement Award***

Summit Magazine is the professional periodical for Public Procurement. With a circulation of 18,000 public procurement officials across Canada, the magazine is printed every second month. In 2007, Summit Magazine introduced a Leadership in Green Procurement Award which is announced at the annual Canadian Public Procurement Council Forum.

There are four mandatory criteria for the award. The green initiative must demonstrate all of the following characteristics:

- measurable and significant benefit – \$\$ savings, reduced environmental footprint, improved public perception;
- a high degree of innovation – new ideas or approaches in either operational or policy settings;
- the potential to be accepted as a “best practice” in green procurement for all levels of government;
- ability to influence the development of a broad range of environmentally friendly products and services in the Canadian marketplace.

In 2008, Halifax Regional Municipality was recognized as the Municipal Finalist for our Sustainable Collaboration Initiative submission which outlined the collaboration and engagement efforts that HRM Procurement Services was undertaking to drive our progress with sustainable procurement.

Recently, staff learned that the 2009 submission for the HRM Green Battery Initiative was recognized as the Municipal Finalist for the Award this year.

## **DISCUSSION**

In 2003, HRM partnered with all levels of government and the private sector to develop Climate SMART, a fully integrated planning approach that addresses the impacts of climate change. The program supports a wide range of adaptation and mitigation activities, including models to determine potential climate change impacts, compiling up-to-date greenhouse gas (GHG) emission information, and preparing emission management options for different sectors of the community. Climate SMART was part of HRM's umbrella *Healthy, Sustainable, Vibrant Communities* strategy under which it implements a variety of sustainability initiatives. Climate SMART was the first initiative of its kind at the municipal level that integrates and mainstreams greenhouse gas emission reduction, climate change impacts and adaptation considerations into its overall corporate decision-making process. In 2005, Regional Council approved a Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emission - Local Action Plan .

Participation in awareness campaigns related to Climate Change help the Municipality and our citizens meet our collective long term sustainability, environmental, and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals.

Halifax Regional Municipality has progressed approximately 50% of our commitment to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions corporately by 2012 (from 2002 levels). Over 10,000 tonnes of GHG's have been reduced through natural gas conversions, lighting retrofits, heat recovery, geothermal, seawater cooling, and continuing installations of other renewable energy technologies. The Canada Games Centre and Centennial Pool refit have used solar heating. These energy reduction efforts extend across multiple HRM divisions: New LED streetlights are being piloted across the municipality; Halifax Water Commission has released a solicitation to study the benefits of capturing waste heat from the sewage treatment plants to heat adjacent neighborhoods; Fleet Services continue to integrate the usage of BioFuel for our bus fleet and recently a Green Vehicle Filter was approved by Regional Council.

Halifax Regional Council and staff remain committed to progress in achieving our GHG reduction goals.

More information on Halifax Regional Municipality's integrated system approach to Sustainability, through: Clean Land, Clean Air, Clean Energy and Clean Water, can be located at the Sustainable Environment Management Office webpage at: <http://www.halifax.ca/environment/semo.html>

### ***Summit Magazine Leadership in Green Procurement Award***

In 2007, during a collaborative meeting with staff and management from HRM Solid Waste Resources, a priority list of Provincial Waste Diversion opportunities was shared. This list identified that single use disposable batteries were a top priority to get out of our regular garbage pick up. Procurement Staff reviewed our corporate consumption for the past several years, and qualitatively investigated how staff disposed of consumed batteries. Staff performed a commodity and market

analysis to find out what alternatives could be, who could supply them, and what the budgetary costs might be. To complete these analysis, a case was generated that demonstrated the cost to convert usage from single use disposables to a rechargeable battery with sufficient amount of chargers.

Subsequent to the completed business case, a plan was developed to:

1. Inject rechargeable batteries and chargers into the organization;
2. Create a waste diversion solution to both rechargeable and disposable batteries that would be included with the supply of batteries;
3. Communicate with the organization and public at large the opportunity and benefits of changing our battery consumption behaviours.

Funding for the project was provided through the Sustainable Communities Reserve in 2008. A competitive solicitation followed, with a high response rate, which included the requirement to supply batteries and the included waste diversion solution. The project was delivered during the fall of 2008. Internal response rate was generally high.

The communication of the initiative included using the Naturally Green Newsletter, internal Communications, and sharing with other public agencies through the newly established Sustainable Procurement Network and Canadian Pollution Prevention Roundtable.

An overview of the initiative will be contained in the November 2009 Summit Magazine issue.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

HRM has no involvement or costs related to the local events organized this year.

#### ***Summit Magazine Leadership in Green Procurement Award***

Costs for this initiative were funded in the 2008/2009 budget from the Sustainable Environment Management Office. The project was completed in 2008.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

350.org: 10 Things you can do to Stop Climate Change

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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# 350

## 10 things you can do to stop climate change

To get to 350ppm, we need to act at home and in the streets.

With the urgency of climate change, if we all were just to focus on individual changes to our lifestyles, we might never reach 350ppm. That's why this year, a movement is growing to call for widespread political change by taking action on 24 October, the International Day of Climate Action. But the changes we can make in our personal lives, and in the ways our community deals with food, energy, and waste are all really important parts of addressing climate change and environmental issues locally - and if we all do it, globally. Here are a few places to start:



### Sustainable Transport

Lace up your shoes, hop on your bike, or find your bus or train fare for some low or no carbon ways to get around town.



### Dispose responsibly

Be responsible with the waste you produce - recycle, and compost your food scraps. No recycling program? Start a campaign!



### Eat Better Foods

Grow your own food, buy locally grown or organic food, and organize your community to have farmers markets.



### Efficient Lightbulbs

Replace your lightbulbs with compact fluorescents - and then organize a community-wide lightbulb swap.



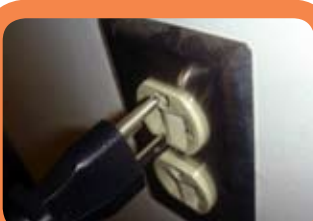
### Letters to the Editor

Become a local spokesperson by following the news, and writing in to the editor when there's an article about climate change or environment.



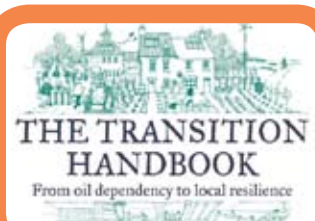
### Buy green

When you do need to buy stuff, make sure it's the most sustainable version of whatever you're getting - this will help send a message to producers.



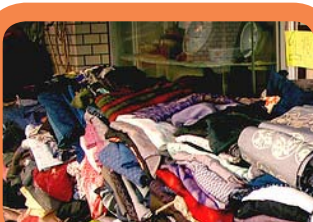
### Unplug

Unplug your appliances, cell phone charger when you aren't using them so they don't waste energy.



### Become a transition town

Google "Transition Towns" and find out how you can get started transitioning your town away from fossil fuels!



### Use less stuff

Many of us have a lot of unnecessary junk - and it doesn't necessarily make us happier. Focus on acquiring fewer things you don't need, and reuse things whenever possible.



### Elect climate champions

Change the system from the inside out and elect climate champions to local office. With your newfound organizing skills, get your friends together, and get the campaign going!



350.org is an international climate change campaign calling for a fair Copenhagen climate treaty that meets the latest science. 350ppm represents the safe upper limit of CO2 in our atmosphere. Take part in your community on 24 October, 2009: An International Day of Climate Action. Visit [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) or contact [organizers@350.org](mailto:organizers@350.org) to get involved.

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