



NEWS RELEASE

City Goes Green with Power Saving Initiatives

Abbotsford, August 31, 2007 – The City of Abbotsford is tuning up civic buildings and tuning out high energy costs by participation several energy saving initiatives.

This summer, City employees at City Hall and the Works Yard have participated BC Hydro's Turn it Off Challenge, a challenge aimed at municipal employees to create awareness and behavioural changes leading to reductions in energy consumption. The municipalities with the most points at the end of the challenge win a Power Smart Makeover on a civic building. City Hall employees have spent the summer monitoring their energy use and turning off unused lights and electronic equipment.

"I encouraged staff to get involved in this project," said Abbotsford Mayor, George F. Ferguson. "It is important that we are conscious of energy savings at work and at home. The city implemented several projects to reduce energy use and lower the cost of building operations and maintenance. It is an important part of our operations."

Inside the office many initiatives have been implemented including switching from CRT monitors to more energy efficient LCD monitors, purchasing "Small Form Factor" PCs which use less power and configuring electronic equipment like computer monitors, photocopiers and laser printers to power down when not in use. City staff is encouraged to save energy by shutting off all personal computers and electronic equipment at the end of the work day and to print documents using both sides of paper.

Major upgrades in the building maintenance department over the last year have substantially cut the City's power usage. The HVAC heating and cooling systems at City Hall and other civic facilities have been upgraded. Systems now automatically adjust temperature and shut down heat and light on a timed system. Heat pumps have also been installed in many buildings and to maximize the efficiency of these new systems, thermo blinds are being tested at City Hall. These blinds will keep the building cooler in the warmer months, resulting in less use of air-conditioning systems. Civic buildings also underwent a BC Hydro lighting assessment in 2007 to identify old and outdated technology. Over the next year, old fixtures will be replaced with newer, more energy efficient lighting.

By participating in the Turn it Off Challenge, Civic Facilities Manger, Victor Pankratz is confident the City will meet its goal to reduce energy consumption by two per cent, but he says competition for the Power Smart Makeover is fierce.

Abbotsford is competing in a category with other cities of similar size including the City of Victoria, District of Delta and the City of New Westminster. Turn it Off Challenge winners will be announced in September at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities convention in Vancouver.

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