

footprint

Making positive
impressions
day after day

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Celebrating the Earth: It's about time

The first signs of spring are obvious: buds on the trees, the return of flip-flops, and the beginning of patio season. But there's another spring tradition that's taken root around the world and continues to grow: celebrating the Earth.

As global warming has become front and centre in our collective conscience, so too have two events that are observed worldwide. Earth Day and Earth Hour aim to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote the need to alter the way we're living today if we're going to enjoy the planet tomorrow.



Starting at the grassroots

The first official Earth Day was held throughout the United States on April 22, 1970. Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, spearheaded the environmental protest "to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda." Twenty million Americans participated in Earth Day 1970, filling streets, parks, and auditoriums as they demonstrated about the need for a clean, sustainable environment. The *Environmental Protection Act* was passed in the U.S. in response to the concerns expressed that day. In 1990, Earth Day festivities expanded to span the globe, with more than 200 million people from 141 countries participating in the celebration.

Fast-forward to April 22, 2010, the 40th anniversary of Earth Day – a milestone that has prompted more and more individuals and nations to get involved in the campaign against complacency and the status quo. For instance, the Earth Day Network has launched A Billion Acts of Green (billionactsofgreen.com), an initiative that encourages people from around the world to register their personal "Act of Green" – anything from planting a tree to making the switch to energy-efficient light bulbs to buying a hybrid car – in a bid to galvanize global environmental leadership.

Planned Earth Day 2010 celebrations include a Dive for Earth Day event organized in Taganga, Colombia; the Alaska Envirothon 2010; tree planting in Gurgoan, India; and the Green Abuja, Green Nigeria initiative. Closer to home, Earth Day Canada recently announced the *Every Day Heroes Film Competition*, where filmmakers are invited to submit a 90-second film that recognizes the contribution of environmental heroes, and the City of Toronto will once again encourage its citizens to participate in the 20-Minute Toronto Makeover.

Counting the minutes

While Earth Day gets us to concentrate on our impact on the environment for a day, Earth Hour encourages us to narrow our focus to one 60-minute period. Organized by the World Wildlife Fund in Sydney, Australia in 2007, Earth Hour is a global event that asks individuals and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights and electrical appliances for one hour, with the goal of raising awareness about climate change.

This year's Earth Hour falls on March 27, 2010, from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm, and organizers hope to build on the success of Earth Hour 2009 which featured participation by 4,088 cities in 88 countries. In the past, landmarks across the globe have turned off their non-essential lighting for Earth Hour, including the Empire State Building in New York; the Sydney Opera House; Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa; the Royal Castle in Stockholm, Sweden; and our very own CN Tower! According to estimates, Toronto saved 900 megawatts-hours of electricity during Earth Hour 2008.

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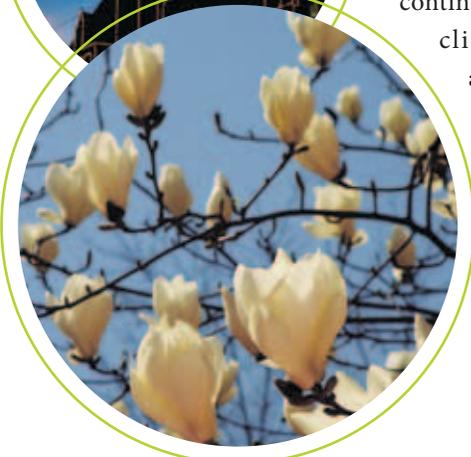


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Taking it further

Some individuals and organizations make the decision to extend their efforts to honour the earth and raise awareness of environmental issues by instituting Earth Week – or even Earth Month, through all of April.

At Wasteco, we take our commitment to the planet one step further by striving to make every day Earth Day. We're constantly searching for ways to improve the waste management solutions we offer clients and continue to educate and support clients in their recycling and energy conservation efforts. We encourage you to join us on March 27, 2010 at 8:30 pm as we turn off all of our non-essential lights in honour of Earth Hour.



ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

Make every day Earth Day!

Here are five ways to make the most of your recycling program:



- 1. Make it easy** by ensuring workstations are equipped to support the various recycling programs, including blue bins for waste paper, side-saddles or containers for regular waste and centrally located bins for cans/glass/plastic, food and beverage containers, and organic food waste.
- 2. Use signs and labelling** to identify what goes where. By educating employees, you'll increase participation in your program and reduce cross-contamination of waste streams.
- 3. Increase program success** through continual spot checks, audits, and education. Ensure the information gathered to generate reports is correct so the program can be measured accurately.
- 4. Educate and monitor contract cleaners** to ensure they understand the recycling program and know which materials should be kept out of the waste. Remember that the cleaning staff can help identify opportunities where equipment or signage is missing or where better employee education is needed.
- 5. Create a Green Team** headed by building management, with representatives from building employees and tenants, all cleaning contractors, and Wasteco, your waste contractor. The Green Team should focus on educating employees, increasing awareness, and constant monitoring.

PROFILE: Lindsay Lorusso, In-house LEED Specialist



Talk to Lindsay Lorusso about the opportunities associated with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and you'll soon discover that her enthusiasm is infectious. Lindsay recently completed the coursework required by LEED Canada to become a LEED Accredited Professional.

"I'm really excited to bring my new expertise to Wasteco's clients," she explains. "I believe there's so much potential to apply green practices and sustainability to all aspects of the industry – whether you're constructing a new building, converting an existing space or implementing on-site waste and recycling programs in your facility."

The LEED rating system provides standards for environmentally sustainable construction and operation, resulting in green buildings that run more efficiently. If you have any LEED-related inquiries, please don't hesitate to contact Lindsay at 416-787-5000 ext. 226.

THE LATEST

Toronto City Council approved a vote for Toronto shoppers to pay a nickel for every throwaway plastic bag they take from retailers starting June 1, 2009. It's time to buy those eco-chic reusable shopping totes!!

1 Earth Hour

On March 27, 2010 at 8:30 pm, join individuals and businesses around the world in turning off your non-essential lights and electrical appliances and showing your commitment to action on climate change.

2 Earth Day

Mark April 22, 2010 on your calendar and plan to do your part for the environment – whether you walk to work, participate in a community clean-up, or make a donation to a cause that focuses on putting an end to global warming.

3 Springfest 2010

The 16th Annual Springfest comes to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on April 28, 2010. This by-invitation-only event features educational seminars and exhibits for building owners, property managers, facility managers, and others responsible for building maintenance and facility operations.

4 The Wasteco Trade Show Booth

If you attended PM Expo and stopped by the Wasteco booth, you may have noticed our new look. We intentionally chose the elements in the booth to demonstrate our commitment to environmental sustainability and the use of LEED-certified materials.

Coming soon

A new, improved Wasteco website will be launched in the months ahead. Stay tuned for more details about the site's updated look and enhanced features!



WASTECO IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF BOMA, OWMA, HEAT, TBMOA, NAID, & RCO www.wasteco.com

Wasteco Toronto Region 416-787-5000
Wasteco Peel/Halton Region 905-459-2716
Wasteco Kitchener/Waterloo, Cambridge and Guelph Region 519-836-1610
Wasteco Shredding Division 905-238-0330