

Horizon News Release

Hamilton and St. Catharines take the *Keep Cool* challenge

Horizon Utilities and The Home Depot encourage retiring and recycling old room air conditioners to reduce energy demand and improve air quality

June 7, 2006 - Ancaster, ON – The mayors of Hamilton and St. Catharines with Horizon Utilities and The Home Depot today challenged residents to recycle and retire old room air conditioners, with the community dropping off the most units winning the prestige of knowing they are conserving energy and helping clean the air. They issued their challenge at the Ancaster The Home Depot during the launch of Clean Air Foundation's *Keep Cool* 2006 program to reduce energy consumption. The municipality that brings in the fewest units will be obligated to plant a shade tree in front of their town hall.

Keep Cool encourages people across Ontario to get rid of old room air conditioners that are high users of electricity and contribute to deteriorating air quality. The program will run for the first time in the area this year from June 10 – 25, on weekends only. It is the only program of its kind in Canada.

Area residents can recycle their old air conditioners at any of the three participating The Home Depot locations in Ancaster, Hamilton and St. Catharines (for location details, please visit www.KeepCool.ca). *Keep Cool* representatives will be at the locations to provide participants with a \$25 Home Depot gift card for each room air conditioner collected.

"Hamilton residents are up for the challenge," said Hamilton Mayor Larry Di Ianni. "We've already experienced some record hot days where we saw electricity demand soar. Old, inefficient air conditioners are responsible for a significant load on the system. We hope that people come out to recycle their old air conditioners and help curb summer electricity demand."

"We are excited to accept this challenge," said St. Catharines Mayor Timothy H. Rigby. "Keep Cool encourages the citizens of St. Catharines to conserve energy – that is a positive message whether the local store wins or not."

The *Keep Cool* program hopes to permanently retire and recycle 750 old air conditioners in the Hamilton and St. Catharines region, reducing energy demand by 0.85 megawatts (MW) – enough electricity to power approximately 170 homes. The overall campaign is expected to collect at least 10,000 units across Ontario, representing energy savings of about 10 MW – the amount of energy required to power about 1600 homes.

"It's important to consider how much energy you are using when trying to stay cool," said Brian Smith Manager of Conservation and Demand Management, Horizon Utilities Corporation. "Helping our customers be more energy efficient and save money helps everyone in the long run. When we use more than what is available, the province needs to import electricity, which is costly."

"We all know how hot it gets in Southern Ontario during the summer months and how the smog makes being outside almost unbearable on occasion," said Ersilia Serafini, Executive Director of the Clean Air Foundation. "By retiring their old air conditioners, these communities can help curb demand on electricity

production and decrease emissions that contribute to smog. We are not asking people to suffer through the heat; we are encouraging them to use cleaner cooling alternatives."

To reduce energy consumption this summer, the program partners encourage Hamilton, Ancaster and St. Catharines residents to use cleaner cooling alternatives such as: new ENERGY STAR® room air conditioners, which use 30-70 per cent less electricity than older models; ceiling fans; blinds and curtains that are kept closed during the day and strategically planted shade trees.

"This program is a great way for people to do their part to reduce energy consumption and improve air quality, while being rewarded for their efforts", said Bill Adams, District Manager, The Home Depot. "People can actually save money over the long term, and help clear the air, by replacing an old room air conditioner with an energy-efficient new one."

Last year, Keep Cool collected and retired 5,772 air conditioners, representing a reduction of about 6 MW of peak demand energy – the amount of energy to power about 1,200 homes. The program resulted in a reduction of 1,488 tonnes of carbon dioxide, 7 tonnes of nitrogen oxide and 315 tonnes of sulphur dioxide. Additionally, 824 kg of refrigerant (ozone depleting substances) were collected.

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About the Clean Air Foundation

The Clean Air Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing, implementing and managing public engagement programs and strategic approaches that lead to measurable emissions reductions, to improve air quality and protect the climate. The Foundation manages six public engagement programs - *Car Heaven*, *Mow Down Pollution*, *Keep Cool*, *Energy Smarts*, *Switch Out* and *Cool Shops*.

About Horizon Utilities Corporation

Horizon Utilities Corporation is the third largest municipally owned electricity distribution company in Ontario and provides electricity and related utility services to over 230,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. Horizon's 340 employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario. Horizon Utilities Corporation is proud to be a founding member of powerWISE®, a brand created to promote energy conservation and reduce the demand for electricity in Ontario. powerWISE® is a joint initiative of the Ontario government and six of Ontario's largest electricity distribution companies. For more information, visit: www.horizonutilities.com and www.powerwise.ca.

About The Home Depot Canada

Founded in 1978, in Atlanta, Georgia, The Home Depot is the world's largest home improvement retailer currently operating 2,064 stores, including 142 The Home Depot stores across Canada. The Company reported fiscal 2005 sales of US\$81.5 billion and employs approximately 355,000 associates, including more than 26,000 Canadians.

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