

From the Classroom to the Community – Creating a Culture of Energy Conservation

Horizon Utilities sponsoring an innovative curriculum-based energy conservation educational program for Grade 5 students

Hamilton/St. Catharines (October 30, 2007) --- Horizon Utilities announced today that under its **kidzpower**TM brand, the company is sponsoring **Generation Conservation**, an innovative and exciting new curriculum-based energy conservation program that will be offered for Grade 5 students attending schools in Hamilton and St. Catharines. This unique program aims to do for energy conservation what was done for blue box recycling – mobilize youth to become a generation of conservers. It will be rolled out in partnership with the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, Niagara Catholic District School Board, and District School Board of Niagara, along with support of the public libraries in Hamilton and St. Catharines.

Generation Conservation consists of ten informative hands-on classroom modules that make learning about energy fun and engaging. The content has been developed to align closely with the requirements of the new Science curriculum that is expected to be released by the Ministry of Education later this year.

Generation Conservation lesson plans include tangible, hands-on activities such as measuring the energy expenditure of wind-up toys; comparing the amount of electricity required to light strings of old-fashioned, incandescent versus new, energy-efficient LED holiday lights; making a fan and then turning it into a wind turbine; as well as charting and graphing the energy consumption of old and new appliances.

According to Horizon Utilities' spokesperson, Sandy Manners, "As part of *Generation Conservation*, each classroom will receive a kit of materials for use in conducting experiments. The program also includes a personal workbook for each child. Children will be required to take these workbooks home and perform energy audits. They will compile data using charts, tables and graphs to demonstrate energy use, discuss energy with their families and, hopefully, make some changes in their own lives to conserve energy."

Horizon Utilities will be providing this exciting, innovative program consisting of teachers' guides and workshops, student workbooks, and classroom materials free of charge to approximately 195 schools, 400 teachers and 7,500 students and their families in the company's service areas in Hamilton and St. Catharines.

"The program certainly engages students and makes learning about energy conservation fun and exciting," says Dave Hansen, Principal of Programs – Elementary for the **Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board**. "Students attending our EcoConference this week had the chance to perform some of the experiments included in the course. It was delightful to see how excited they got discovering how electricity works and how easy it is to conserve energy. Now that our students have seen for themselves how much more electricity traditional holiday lights consume, I will bet that they will be explaining to their parents when they get home why they should change to LED lights this Christmas season."

"We're excited to be part of *Generation Conservation* and feel this is a valuable resource for our teachers," says Heather Gardner, Program Effectiveness Consultant for the **Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board**. "Some of our staff were introduced to the program last week and are looking forward to delivering it in the classroom. Teachers will be able to sign up for workshops in December and by Earth Day 2008, many of our students will be able to proudly show that they have already started to make a difference to the environment."

Each module of *Generation Conservation* starts off with an “energizer” in which students perform a few minutes of physical activity in a way that relates to energy. In addition to hands-on science, the inquiry-based program integrates literacy, numeracy, social studies, art, drama and research skills all within the context of what students can do to make a difference by conserving energy in their lives.

“The incorporation of a variety of modalities and skills demonstrates that this program not only satisfies curriculum, it endeavours to use an innovative approach with respect to environmental education,” said Shawna Hopkins, Science Consultant, Grade K - 12 for the **District School Board of Niagara**. “Students will be developing their skills with character education, such as learning empathy and responsibility for the environment, while practicing their literacy and numeracy skills in a fun and engaging way. That is what learning is all about.”

“Grade 5 students are at a critical age where attitudes and behaviours regarding the environment and energy conservation are beginning to take shape,” notes Mike Sheahan, Program Consultant, **Niagara Catholic District School Board**. “*Generation Conservation* provides our teachers with effective curriculum support to deliver informative messages in a fun and interactive manner. The format using modules and well-designed workbooks engages our students to be active learners and encompasses elements of numerous curriculum areas. Key themes about conservation and energy empower our children to take ownership of their future. Teachers will appreciate the training support and look forward to the workshops that are part of this excellent and vital program.”

Horizon Utilities has a history of partnering with organizations and institutions in the communities it serves to provide education and explore ways of conserving energy. “By offering *Generation Conservation* through local district school boards and involving the public libraries in both communities to provide research connections for the students,” points out Max Cananzi, President and CEO of Horizon Utilities, “we are stepping outside the traditional role of a local utility company and are living up to our tag line – **Looking beyond ...**. Through these efforts we are looking to the future and taking steps to start to create a new generation of citizens who understand the consequences of the wasteful use of energy and are committed to finding ways to conserve energy to improve the environment.”

Horizon Utilities believes education is key to meeting Ontario’s energy challenges. “We fully expect that *Generation Conservation* will be instrumental in carrying the conservation message into our communities, and in helping teachers, students, and their families understand what they can do to make a difference,” says Cananzi.

For tips on how to conserve energy, please visit www.horizonutilities.com.

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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 231,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. The company is owned by Hamilton Utilities Corporation and St. Catharines Hydro Inc. and operates out of facilities in Hamilton, St. Catharines, and Stoney Creek.

Horizon's 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 Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Since 1855, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board has provided a quality Christ-centred education to generations of young people in the Hamilton community. Nearly 30,000 students, JK to Grade 12, are served annually through 53 elementary and seven secondary schools where “*each belongs.*” Our mission is to enable all

learners to realize the fullness of humanity through gospel teachings, and responsible use of human, financial and natural resources which promotes academic excellence and clear indicators of achievement.

About Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board serves more than 52,000 students in kindergarten to Grade 12 in 114 schools across Hamilton. For more information, please visit: www.hwdsb.on.ca.

About District School Board of Niagara

The District School Board of Niagara is pleased to provide an outstanding education for our communities and students. Progressive programs for all 42,000 students delivered by 5,000 dedicated professional staff in 119 schools are a trademark of this system.

Achieving Success Together

About Niagara Catholic District School Board

The Niagara Catholic District School Board offers Catholic education to approximately 26,000 students in the Niagara Region. The Board has 53 elementary schools and eight secondary schools with approximately 1,432 teachers on staff. The Board also offers continuing education classes to the community through seven Adult Learning Campuses.

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Photos are available upon request.

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