



Horizon Utilities Corporation



Media Release

Program To Help Tenants in Community Housing Reduce Hydro Costs Launched In Downtown Hamilton

Hamilton, ON (June 1, 2005) --- A pilot program designed to help tenants of social housing reduce their hydro costs through energy conservation was launched today at Victoria Park Community Homes on Queen Street in downtown Hamilton.

The program is being delivered through powerWISE™, the name of the multi-year initiative sponsored by Horizon Utilities to help consumers conserve energy and keep their hydro bills affordable.

“This is a unique program designed to communicate with the tenants of Victoria Park Community Homes about the importance of energy conservation and to provide them with the tools they need to take action to reduce their energy consumption, and therefore their utility costs,” said Brian Smith, Manager of Conservation and Demand Management, Horizon Utilities Corporation.

Both Horizon Utilities Corporation companies, Hamilton Hydro and St. Catharines Hydro, have committed to sponsoring social housing energy conservation initiatives in Hamilton and St. Catharines. In Hamilton, there are plans for a second pilot program through City Housing Hamilton, with a goal to extend the initiative to tenants in social housing across the City.

“We know that renters represent more than 60 percent of the housing in urban downtown cores and that 20 percent of Ontario tenants are paying 50 percent or more of their income on shelter, including utilities. Our plan is to help those living in social housing keep their affordable housing affordable by reducing their utility costs, and we hope that what we do in Hamilton will be used as a template throughout Ontario through the Social Housing Services Corporation,” added Smith.

The program at Victoria Park Community Housing begins today with a free presentation for the tenants on energy conservation from 5pm to 7pm at the complex gymnasium. The overall initiative includes interactive learning, specific programs to help overcome language and cultural differences, and establishment of “conservation ambassadors”, tenants willing to discuss energy conservation with other tenants in the building.

“Victoria Park is an appropriate location for this pilot energy conservation program. It’s a good representative of our commitment to helping people reduce their energy costs, change their long-term behaviours and it’s connected to Hamilton Community Energy (HCE), a Hamilton Utilities Company, which provides an environmentally friendly and stable energy source, and we have been partnered for many years with Green Venture, the not-for-profit community based organization committed to energy, water and waste reduction, education, green space conservation and the greening of small businesses,” said Smith.

For More Information:

Brian Smith, Manager of Conservation and Demand Management
Horizon Utilities Corporation
905 521-4901

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Background

- Victoria Park Community Homes Inc. is a private not-for-profit housing company providing social housing in the York-Queen Street area of downtown Hamilton. The VPCH's complex includes two apartment building located at 151 Queen Street North and 40 Oxford Street, as well as the Victoria Park Community Homes management offices and community/daycare centre.
- powerWISE™ is a trademark developed by Hamilton Utilities Corporation and is now being used by five other major urban utilities to help consumers conserve energy and keep their hydro bills affordable.
- The initiative at Victoria Park Community Homes is only one part of Horizon Utilities Corporation's (Hamilton Hydro & St.Catharines Hydro) multi-year conservation and energy demand management program (CDM), approved by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB). Both Horizon companies will be sponsoring social housing programs in their individual cities, as well as other initiatives that include energy conservation education for customers, smart meter pilots, energy audits, and reduction of energy loss in the local electricity distribution systems.
- Three buildings belong to Victoria Park Community Homes Inc. were connected to the Hamilton Community Energy (HCE) district heating system in 2005. HCE, a subsidiary of Hamilton Utilities Corporation, opened the city's first district heating system in May 2003. HCE's district heating system uses waste energy from a natural gas fire, 90-ton engine to generate heat and 3.5 MW of electricity