

St. Catharines Counts Itself In for Conservation Challenge

City of St. Catharines calls on all residents to compete and conserve on August 14

July 30, 2009, ST. CATHARINES, ON — The City of St. Catharines is confirming its participation in Ontario's upcoming *Count Me In!* Conservation Challenge Day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, August 14, the anniversary of the North American blackout in 2003. The *Count Me In Challenge* was formerly known as the *Blackout Challenge*.

As part of the campaign, residents of St. Catharines are being asked to pledge a commitment and to create a personalized conservation plan at www.countmeinontario.ca, anytime from now until Challenge Day. All Ontarians who take the *Count Me In!* pledge will have the chance to win one of three grand prizes and are eligible for daily prizes from now until Challenge Day.

"I am challenging all residents and businesses to take the pledge this year to save energy," says Mayor Brian McMullan. "I know that St. Catharines residents are concerned about the environment. Here is a way to show other municipalities that the Garden City is serious about energy conservation."

As a participant, St. Catharines will be competing against other municipalities in two different categories:

- The highest percentage drop in electricity consumption on August 14, and
- The highest per capita participation in the *Count Me In!* pledge drive.

Results of the province-wide Challenge Day will be announced at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Annual Conference on August 19th in Ottawa.

"Horizon Utilities is pleased to see the City of St. Catharines take on this challenge to help encourage a culture of energy conservation in the community," said Horizon Utilities' President and CEO, Max Cananzi. "If everyone will commit to turning off a few lights, setting their air conditioner at 26°C or higher for the day, or hanging their laundry out to dry, we should see a big difference in energy demand."

Horizon Utilities offers a number of other ways residents can reduce their consumption. These include:

- If possible, turn off air conditioners between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- If air conditioning is necessary, set temperature at 26 °C or higher
- Turn off lights, computers, sound systems and TVs when not in use
- Replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescent lights
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Barbecue instead of using the stove or oven
- Dry laundry outdoors

The *Count Me In!* Community Challenge was issued to municipal leaders across the province on June 3 by Woodstock Mayor, Michael Harding. The City of Woodstock has played a leadership role among Ontario municipalities over the past few years encouraging energy conservation with its August 14 Blackout Day initiative. This year, Woodstock has been joined by the Ontario Power Authority, the Independent Electricity System Operator, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Electricity Distributors Association to create the *Count Me In!* Community Challenge Day. More information is available at www.countmeinontario.ca.

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