



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



Earth Hour - Please Join the Challenge on Saturday March 28th

(Waterloo, ON – March 13, 2009) The City of Waterloo, along with the Cities of Kitchener and Cambridge and communities, businesses and individuals throughout the world will be participating in Earth Hour on March 28th, 2009 from 8:30 – 9:30 p.m., by turning off lights for this hour. Any support you can provide in sending the message out to our community to participate would be greatly appreciated!

A number of businesses and associations have already advised Waterloo of their participation. For example, Moksha Yoga Waterloo (located on Erb Street East) will be hosting a one hour silent candlelit Yoga class to celebrate Earth Hour. Says, Ashley Keefe, owner director and teacher, Moksha Yoga Waterloo, “Switching off the lights is just one simple action we can take to help and it sends a powerful message that we care about our planet.” To participate in the class, Ashley is asking participants to donate a minimum of \$10 which will go to the David Suzuki Foundation in support of their work against climate change.

At the University of Waterloo, the members of the University of Waterloo Sustainability Project will be collaborating with the Warrior Weekend events to provide an “Earth Hour” weekend of activities. During the actual Earth Hour, they’ll be hosting a lights out jam session in the Student Life Centre at University of Waterloo.

The Waterloo Region Record is also doing their part by running a series of ads and including a special poster insert in the paper on the morning of March 28th. Interested participants in the event can post this sign in their front window to show their support.

Waterloo North Hydro has agreed to measure our community’s energy reduction during the one hour. As well, they are reminding their staff to shut off all non-essential lighting within Waterloo North Hydro facilities.

The City of Waterloo will participate by powering down all non-essential lighting in City facilities, with the exception of lighting which is left on for safety reasons. City Hall already operates on a system of night lighting throughout the weekend and the City Hall Atrium’s lights are monitored throughout the year by a photo cell which is automated to only turn on lighting when the natural sunlight filtering through the windows fails to safely illuminate the area. Solar panels at City Hall also contribute to reduced energy consumption.

The City of Waterloo is also committed to an Energy Management Plan that outlines a strategy to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in all City-run facilities by 30% in two years. This represents a savings in energy use of 12,000 equivalent MWh and 3,000 tones of greenhouse gas emissions.

Last year, Waterloo participated in Earth Hour and reduced energy consumption by 4 to 5% during that hour. The Voluntary Blackout, held in the summer of 2008, 2007 and 2006, on the anniversary of the very real blackout of 2003, encouraged Waterloo residents to cut their energy use for one day. The first year Waterloo participated, the community came in 2nd place when competing with cities across Ontario with energy use down by 4.2%.

- 30 -

For further information about **Earth Hour** activities at the City of Waterloo, please contact:

Jean Starchuk
Project Manager
Asset Management
City of Waterloo
500 Parkside Drive
Waterloo, ON Canada
N2J 1P7
Tel: 519-885-1220, ext. 223
jstarchuk@city.waterloo.on.ca

If you would like further information about the candle light Yoga class at **Moksha Yoga Waterloo**, please contact:

Ashley Keefe
Studio Owner, Director, Teacher
Moksha Yoga Waterloo
55 Erb Street East,
Waterloo, Ontario
N2J 4K8
Tel: 519-954-3516
ashley@mokshayogawaterloo.com

For more information about University of Waterloo **Earth Hour** activities, please contact:

Tania Cheng or Danielle Woon
University of Waterloo
UW Sustainability Project
uwsp@feds.ca
519-888-4567, ext. 32182

In addition, we've posted information on our website, www.waterloo.ca about Earth Hour and have included tips for both home and office energy conservation. Waterloo North Hydro's website, www.wnhydro.com has many programs, tips and educational information about energy conservation, too.