

Municipalities Take Part in Earth Day 2008

For Immediate Release

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Halifax, NS: For 27 years, Earth Day has been a time of both celebration and environmental engagement – it is the largest secular civic event in the world, and over 6 million Canadians now take part in events and activities, from sea-to-sea-to-sea.

This Earth Day, municipal governments around Nova Scotia are joining together with local organizations and institutions to celebrate their environmental accomplishments, and to take action and continue improving the sustainability of their communities.

As the order of government closest to citizen's daily lives, municipal governments have an important role to play in developing sustainable communities. Earth-friendly initiatives underway in NS municipalities include constructing green buildings like fire halls and civic centres; declaring vehicle idling free zones and fair trade towns; hosting energy and eco-fairs; undertaking streetlight conversion programs; setting greenhouse gas reduction targets; implementing corporate pesticide reduction policies; and managing leading-edge recycling and composting programs. In March, 25% of Nova Scotia municipalities joined the international Earth Hour challenge to signal support on climate change action by the simple action of turning off non-essential lights for 1 hour.

“Our municipal governments make decisions affecting the sustainability of their communities every day,” says Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) President Robert Wrye. “Events like Earth Day provide us with occasions to mark our successes, but also to reflect and re-confirm our commitments to sustainability in some very practical and ‘hands-on’ ways.”

“Hands-on” Earth Week activities are taking place in a number of locations. Halifax Regional Municipality – recently ranked as Canada's fifth most sustainable city by Corporate Knights magazine – is leading a tree-planting ceremony at Sullivan's Pond, in Dartmouth. Tree plantings are also occurring in the towns of Wolfville, Annapolis Royal and Antigonish. Litter clean-ups are happening across the province from Pictou to Kentville, the South Shore, and Yarmouth. The Municipality of East Hants has organized a municipal-wide Book Swap at each of their schools. Earth Week in the Antigonish area also includes a free “eco-friendly” barbeque and apple cider, a “Walk 'N' Roll tour”, an environmental radio trivia for the community, the Annual Brierly Brook Clean-up, and a Waste *Less* Plastics Challenge.

For more information, contact:

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