

Dalhousie University's Eco-Efficiency Centre Newsletter

We've moved!

Dalhousie University's Eco-Efficiency Centre is now located at:
 5269 Morris Street, Halifax NS, B3J 1B6
 We can still be reached by phone at 902-461-6704
 and by e-mail at ecentre@dal.ca.

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Nova Scotia Renewable Energy Consultations

The province of Nova Scotia has committed to providing 25 percent of the province's electricity with renewable energy by the year 2015. A consulting team from Dalhousie University, lead by Dr. David Wheeler, is working in partnership with the Department of Energy, to facilitate public multidisciplinary consultation sessions.

The purpose of these sessions is to evaluate various renewable energy scenarios, considering the social, environmental, technological, and economic aspects of each option. This independent stakeholder consultation process will thoroughly assess options for investments in low-carbon energy production and distribution in Nova Scotia.

The first session, *Scenario Workshop and Development* was held on Thursday, September 10, 2009 at the Atlantica Hotel in Halifax. The next session, *Stakeholder Consultation I* is scheduled for Monday, October 19, location to be announced.

The costs and benefits of each energy scenario and investment model will be weighed through an expert Project Advisory Committee and participating stakeholders from across civil society, government, industry, and academia. The project's final outcome will be a report detailing the recommended scenario or scenarios and key decision-making indicators.

For more information, please visit:
http://eco-efficiency.management.dal.ca/Events/Special_Events/.



Upcoming Events

Energy Efficiency Financing Workshop

Natural Resources Canada is bringing Energy Efficiency Financing to Halifax. This Dollars to \$ense Energy Management workshop promises to teach you the skills you need to fund your next energy efficient project. The workshop will be on Thursday November 5, 2009 at the Citadel Halifax Hotel. Maintenance supervisors, operating engineers, financial and other managers are especially welcome. Participants will learn how to calculate the financial value of energy efficiency projects, use tools to build a strong energy efficiency project business case, understand the basics of third-party financing as well as other skills. Details about this and other Dollars to \$ense Workshops are available at:

<http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/industrial/training-awareness/index.cfm?CFID=66564702&CFTOKEN=40113543>



Natural Resources
Canada

Ressources naturelles
Canada

4 Days Thinking Forward Halifax 2009: Sustained by Design

4 Days Thinking Forward Halifax will uncover the power of design thinking to reshape economies, develop public services and improve quality of life. The event begins on Wednesday October 21 with an address from John Thackara, founder and Director of *Doors of Perception*, and ends on Saturday October 24 with a Street Festival. Questions to be explored include, "What might life in a sustainable world be like?" and, "What design steps are needed to get us from here to there?". For more information on this event please visit: <http://4days.ca/>.

Power of Green Conference 2009

World class experts will combine their knowledge at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax, on Wednesday October 21, 2009. This year's Power of Green Conference will focus on the "Business Case for Sustainability" and will be tailored to meet the needs of business professionals, government officials, academic faculty and students among others. Business sustainability experts, leading CEOs, world class environmentalists and respected policy experts will be available to share their insight and meaningful advice. The Conference will include keynote speeches as well as interactive panel sessions.

More information about the Conference is found at <http://www.thepowerofgreen.ca/>.

First Annual Atlantic Eco-Expo

The Atlantic Eco-Expo will provide an opportunity for businesses, government organizations and other groups to showcase their sustainable initiatives. This will be held at the Halifax Exhibition Park on November 21 and 22, 2009. Visit <http://atlanticecoexpo.com/> to find out more.

CIPEC Awards Dinner, Energy 2009

CIPEC Leadership Awards will be presented to companies under categories including corporate stewardship, process and technology improvements, and employee awareness and training. The CIPEC Awards Dinner will be held on November 24 and 25, 2009 as part of *Energy 2009*, Canada's foremost industrial energy efficiency conference. To learn more about this event, please visit: <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/industrial/opportunities/cipecleader/index.cfm?attr=24>.

Halifax Tourism Expo 2009

The Halifax Tourism Expo on November 30, 2009, will provide a unique opportunity for businesses to network with new and existing customers. Over 500 key decision makers in the Tourism Industry are also expected at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax for this event. Find out more about this opportunity at <http://www.masterpromotions.ca/tourism-expo.asp>.

Energy Solutions Workshop 2009

The 4th annual Energy Solutions Workshop will be at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel on November 30, 2009. This workshop will teach business, commercial and residential consumers of oil and electricity how energy usage and costs can be reduced by exploring alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and natural gas. More information is available at:

http://www.jamesongroup.ca/content/Energy_Solutions.

Under Pressure: Sustainability Demands from your Supply Chain

Few could have predicted that Walmart would become a white knight in sustainable business. Love it or loathe it, the reality is that the company's sheer size and reach mean that the changes the company demands will permeate a supply chain that casts its net over more than 100,000 suppliers. And with a renewed commitment to enhance its sustainability practices, the company is making news again. In mid-July it was announced that in consultation with a number of social and environmental groups, Walmart would be assessing suppliers with a newly developed Sustainability Index. The questions request in simple terms that companies report on a number of indicators, such as their greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption, social compliance in manufacturing facilities and whether or not contributions are made to community initiatives where suppliers are located.



Keen readers of this column will recall last summer's article on the business interest in undertaking carbon footprint calculations. Not coincidentally, Walmart was mentioned therein as well regarding its 2007 announcement to request greenhouse gas data from its suppliers. As tangible and local evidence of the ripple effects of these decisions, a number of companies in Nova Scotia undertaking these calculations specifically in response to Walmart's request.

Effecting systemic change through supply chain is surely not a phenomenon. Demands for ever-lower labour costs have undoubtedly contributed to the globalization of manufacturing. However, employing the supply chain as a mechanism for rapid and large-scale shifts toward sustainability, shifts greater than any single politician could affect, is relatively recent. And regardless of Walmart's motivation, be it genuine concern for the natural environment or pure profit motive through forcing more efficient production or improving its famously battered public image, the outcome is the same: a marketplace that is, at the very least, paying more attention to its sustainability practices.



The implications of these changes are clear: whether your business is already moving to strengthen your social and environmental performance or not, government action may not be the catalyst. Rather, it will be your customers, both individual and corporate buyers, who are increasingly conscious of the negative impacts of their purchasing decisions and looking outward to reduce it.

So if you have not yet been asked these questions, what can you do to respond when asked? Start with energy. Oftentimes, electricity and gas bills are directed to the accounting departments without much consideration as to the actual consumption, as opposed to the cost. Start keeping track of your electricity consumption on a billing-period basis and compare it to the same time last year. Unfortunately, because of the electricity generation mix in Nova Scotia, the province is the third most carbon-intensive in terms of our electricity footprint. Fortunately, anywhere you can reduce electricity consumption translates into considerable greenhouse gas emissions reductions. Switch lightbulbs, put your office equipment on power bars that you shut off on nights and weekends, and talk to your team about ensuring that everyone commits to reducing their electricity consumption wherever possible.

You would never offer a product whose quality you did not stand behind. Sustainability is already becoming the next requisite attribute defining success. If these are not considerations you are already incorporating, you can expect questions from your supply chain, especially where you serve larger businesses. Small and nimble companies have the opportunity to make changes quickly, unhampered by the bureaucracy that hinders big business shifts. Start making those changes today, and your business will flourish tomorrow.

By: Ray Côté, Senior Research Fellow with the Eco-Efficiency Centre, and a retired professor with the School for Resource and Environmental Studies at Dalhousie University and Emily Richardson, Greenhouse Gas Analyst with the Eco-Efficiency Centre. Reprinted from the September 2009 issue of the Burnside News, www.burnsidenews.com

Chanterelle Country Inn and Cottages : Greening the Cabot Trail experience Baddeck, NS

The Chanterelle Country Inn and Cottages, set high on a bluff overlooking St. Ann's Harbour in Cape Breton, is an internationally recognized example of Nova Scotia businesses' commitment to sustainability. The Inn has received numerous accolades for its notable green business practices, including a listing in National Geographic Traveler's "Stay List" for its use of local resources and environmental responsibility, and a 2006 Pollution Prevention Award from the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Through its support for local businesses, resource conservation initiatives, and guest engagement, the Chanterelle Inn leads by example in sustainable tourism.

Ingrained in the day-to-day operations of the Chanterelle Inn is a commitment to sustainable practices, one that often carries significant financial benefits. Three of Chanterelle's cottages were recycled from a property in Ingonish, saving the business \$15,000 and a winter objective to reduce energy costs yielded a 40 percent reduction in energy use. While this electricity-saving goal was achieved through simple solutions like improving insulation and shutting off appliances when not in use, the Chanterelle Inn has also incorporated a number of innovative technologies into its operations to reduce its environmental impact. For example, solar panels used for space and water heating reduce energy needs. In addition, the Inn was designed to maximize fresh air circulation, reducing the need for air conditioning in the summer. Supported by energy-saving lighting, argon-filled windows, and linen- and towel-reuse programs in guest rooms, the Inn's energy-saving initiatives achieve not only measurable reductions in energy use, but also valuable reductions in both operating costs and the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

The Chanterelle Inn's eco-efficiency practices extend well beyond mere energy-saving initiatives. Low-flow shower heads and low-flush toilets have curtailed the Inn's water consumption, and choosing non-toxic, biodegradable cleaners, low-VOC paints and no herbicides and pesticides on site, help minimize the chemicals used throughout the Inn. To truly weave sustainability into the fabric of the Chanterelle Inn, it maintains a dedicated focus on "pre-cycling", preventing waste before it can be generated. For example, to prevent the release of greenhouse gases from transportation, the Inn's dining room has designed its menu with low food miles in mind, choosing local ingredients wherever possible and listing the distance each item has travelled. To prevent packaging waste, the Inn's preference for local food means that less packaging is required to transport produce and meats. Using reusable containers instead of plastic bags on grocery shopping trips, providing guests with reusable water bottles for hikes and day trips, offering cloth napkins in the dining room and only reusable shampoo and lotion containers in guest rooms all minimize unnecessary paper and plastic waste.

In addition to these laudable green policies, Chanterelle Country Inn and Cottages is also actively involved in community initiatives, donating free stays to support fundraising by environmental groups throughout Atlantic Canada, such as the Ecology Action Centre and the Two Rivers Wildlife Park. For its ongoing and exemplary commitment to sustainability, the Chanterelle Country Inn and Cottages is preserving the tourism landscape in Nova Scotia one day at a time.



Useful Resources

Industrial Best Practices for Water Management Guide

As noted in our July newsletter, Dalhousie University's Eco-Efficiency Centre in partnership with the Salamander Foundation has developed Industrial best practices for water management: A guide for industry to help reduce your water footprint. An electronic copy of this guide is now available for download from the Eco-Efficiency Centre's homepage, www.dal.ca/eco-efficiency.



Carbon Footprinting for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises



The Eco-Efficiency Centre has various tools and tips to help small and medium-sized companies manage their greenhouse gas emissions. Our newest tool is a carbon footprint calculator for Canadian businesses that follows the internationally recognized Greenhouse Gas Protocol®. The Centre is currently working to upload our calculator as an interactive feature on our website. Please visit our website in the coming months for an official announcement, www.dal.ca/eco-efficiency. For more information on greenhouse gas accounting, please visit: http://eco-efficiency.management.dal.ca/Services/Carbon_Footprinting/index.php.

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Dalhousie University's Eco-Efficiency Centre is a non-profit environmental management centre supporting small- and medium-sized enterprises in Nova Scotia. Since 1998, the Centre has worked with several hundred businesses throughout Atlantic Canada, identifying opportunities to enhance productivity and optimize both environmental performance and operational efficiency.

Through personalized and cost-effective services designed for SMEs, the Centre is an award-winning resource for businesses responding to the increasing focus on enterprise sustainability. Now that carbon footprints have become an indicator of corporate competitiveness, the Centre also provides businesses with tools and guidance on measuring and managing their energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

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