

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2013**

SUBJECT CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM – QUARTERLY UPDATE

ISSUE

To provide the Environmental Services Committee with a quarterly update on the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Climate Action Program.

BACKGROUND

The CRD and its municipal partners recognize that climate change is a critical issue to address from both a greenhouse gas mitigation and a climate adaptation perspective. There are significant economic, social and environmental benefits from investing in policy, technology, programs, infrastructure and education to reduce energy use and emissions and prepare for climate change impacts in the Capital Region.

The CRD established a regional Climate Action Program in 2009 under Bylaw No. 3510. The program is supported by a program coordinator and a part-time assistant and focuses on five distinct areas:

1. providing support to local governments in developing and implementing corporate and community climate action goals (emissions reductions and climate adaptation) as part of Official Community Plans and voluntary commitments under the BC Climate Action Charter;
2. liaising with senior levels of government on climate change-related programs, policies and legislation that impact the Capital Region;
3. providing scientific information, data and indicators related to local and regional greenhouse gas emissions and projected climactic impacts;
4. supporting the CRD in fulfilling its own corporate mitigation and adaptation objectives; and
5. building capacity and catalyzing action through educational partnerships with public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations and community organizations.

CRD staff implement research projects, develop community partnerships and execute measurable initiatives that directly align with local and regional goals to reduce energy use, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change impacts.

The program focuses on disseminating relevant information for elected officials and municipal staff, building capacity in the public, private and non-profit sectors, and supporting various CRD departments in accelerating climate action through service delivery. Most recently, the CRD helped celebrate the accomplishment of achieving carbon neutral operations as a part of its

commitment under the BC Climate Action Charter. Further, climate change is playing a central role in each of the 12 strategic areas under the Regional Sustainability Strategy.

An overview of activities is provided in Appendix A, including recent accomplishments, funding partnerships and projects. The program also shares this information with politicians, municipal staff and community stakeholders through regular e-newsletters.

CONCLUSION

The Climate Action Program continues to provide corporate and municipal support with a focus on innovative, diverse and measureable programs.

Information and partnership requests, both internally at the CRD and externally with community stakeholders, continue to grow as the service demonstrates its credibility as a regional hub for climate change issues.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Services Committee receive the Climate Action Program quarterly update for information.

Glenn Harris, Ph.D., R.P.Bio.
Senior Manager, Environmental Protection

Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng.
General Manager
Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence

Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer
Concurrence

SW:cam

Attachment: 1

CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM
2013 PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES
(update July 2013)

A number of current initiatives of the Climate Action Service are identified below. For more information on these and other initiatives, visit www.crd.bc.ca/climatechange. Elected officials can also subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter distributed by the Climate Action Program specifically for local governments.

- The **Tap by Tap Program for Multi-Unit Residential Buildings** provides free energy and water saving fixtures to eligible apartments, condominiums, row houses and town house complexes in order to save potable water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Through an innovative partnership with BC Hydro and Fortis BC, this program targets retrofits in 3,000 multi-unit residential building units by December 2013.

As part of the program, each building also receives a free walk-through energy assessment to further identify opportunities to reduce energy use in common areas such as lobbies, hallways, laundry rooms and parking garages. It is estimated that the project will save 72,000,000 litres of water and nearly 500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂e) in less than 1 year.

- The **LiveSmart Small Business and Farm Assessment Program** offers free walk-through energy assessments to target electricity, natural gas and fuel use reductions. More than 30 eligible businesses have participated in this program since it was launched on April 1, 2013. The goal is to complete 140 assessments by March 31, 2014.
- **My Green Plan** is a web-based initiative led by the Community Social Planning Council. This tool focuses on supporting residents in sustainability by allowing them to develop a customized plan to reduce their impact on the local environment. The CRD Climate Action Program facilitated a partnership with numerous CRD divisions to integrate messages, resources and actions into the tool. With a focus on marketing the tool to newcomers, neighborhood associations, church groups, sports teams, and other established networks, the My Green Plan website will be used as an outreach tool throughout 2013 and 2014.
- The quarterly **Resilient Region Exchange** events, hosted by the CRD Climate Action Program, continue to attract hundreds of community leaders from business, academia, government, non-profit and industry. In April 2013, the event was held at the newly-completed Oak Bay Beach Hotel. Most recently, in June 2013, the breakfast was hosted at the Robert Bateman Centre and attracted close to 125 participants.
- The **Off the Grid Youth Climate Summit and Festival** was once again sponsored by the CRD Climate Action Program. This third annual event attracted nearly 200 young people to Royal Roads University and provided support in building capacity, sharing information and motivating youth to take action in their schools and communities.

- The **Climate Smart Industry Benchmark Series** and the **BOMA Building Performance Study** are two research initiatives that the CRD Climate Action Program has sponsored in 2013. The Climate Smart technical briefs focus on gaining a better understanding of the energy and emissions portfolios of various industries (such as office, construction and accommodation sectors) and best investments for reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The BOMA project focuses on energy performance in mixed-use commercial and residential buildings and the impact of third-party certification programs such as LEED, Built Green and BOMA Best.
- **The Climate Action To-Go Kit** initiative provides a convenient and practical way to engage residents on household energy use. With sponsorship from BC Hydro, the Climate Action Program developed 24 kits that contain tools, resources and activities to better understand energy, climate and community sustainability issues. These kits are free to borrow from all locations of the Greater Victoria Public Library, the Sooke, Sidney and Port Renfrew branches of the Vancouver Island Regional Library and the Salt Spring Island Public Library. Since launching in October 2012, 100% of participating libraries have lent out kits. The kits will be available until at least October 2013.
- **The Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS)** includes the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies within each of the 12 strategic areas. Climate Action Program staff have been actively participating on the Inter-Agency Committee since January 2013. In addition, staff are working on developing a **Climate Action Blueprint** document—a 10-year framework for implementing the goals and objectives under the RSS.
- In Summer 2013, the CRD will launch a project to undertake coastal **sea-level rise mapping and risk assessment** for the capital region. The mapping will help CRD and municipal partners respond to the “Guidelines for Management of Coastal Flood Hazard Land Use” developed by the Province of BC. Funding for the project has been provided by Natural Resources Canada and Tides Canada, along with cash and in-kind support from the CRD.

Working with municipal and community partners through December 2014, the CRD will work with specialists to implement a robust methodology to identify risks and provide critical information on vulnerable areas, buildings and infrastructure. The project will also include developing a model bylaw that directly aligns with objectives related to regional cooperation and regional infrastructure identified in the 2013-2015 CRD Strategic Plan.

- **Solar Without Borders** is a new initiative that will be launched in September 2013. Pending final approvals from Natural Resources Canada this summer, the CRD will roll out a new solar hot water incentive program for single family and multi-unit residential dwellings as well as businesses, stemming from the Solar Colwood program. The program will provide a federally-funded incentive to help accelerate solar hot water system deployment in the other 12 municipalities, as well as in the Juan De Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas.