

Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Summit

Best Practices Exchange Proceedings

May 21st, 2009

Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Summit

Keynote Address – **Evidence that Civic Action to Clean the Air Saves Lives** – Dr. Ted Boadway, Ontario Medical Association

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- Deaths and significant health effects of air pollution have been scientifically documented since the 1950s.
- It is only in the last 10 years however that the physiological processes and effects have been better understood and quantified. The pollutants of greatest health concern are NO_x, SO_x, VOCs which give rise to ozone, and particulate matter (PM). PM can cause inflammation, and PM 0.1 is the greater health concern.
- Individually, high levels of ozone in the summer affect breathing, called a subclinical effect; higher ozone concentrations can cause death in those with respiratory illnesses.
- Collectively, high levels of ozone result in thousands of admissions to hospital (4% increase for every 30 ppb rise – can climb to 16%/120 ppb in summer).
- Air pollution can harden arteries by irreversibly changing DNA. In fact, PM 0.1 and OLP ('bad' cholesterol) are synergistic in harm (1+1 = 3).
- ICAP (Illness Cost of Air Pollution) is used to calculate costs of air pollution on healthcare system with census data, air quality and CIHI (hospital) data. Studies now completed for every Canadian province.
- Studies show reductions in air pollution increases life expectancy significantly.
- It makes more sense to deal with the cause of the problem (air pollution) than it does to treat the health effects due to air pollution. Civic action can make huge gains in reducing air pollution and can save lives and health care costs.

SWO-Clean Air Council Declaration and Activities, Eva Ligeti, Clean Air Partnership

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- The Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Summit is important because the region shares an airshed – therefore collaboration is important and much more useful than individual action.

- The GTA-CAC has been collaborating for 10 years – with some significant successes, however it is still working to make air quality better.
- There are other examples of regional collaborations – it makes sense to share experiences and best practices.
- The SWO-CAC Declaration actions are based on priorities identified by Southwestern Ontario municipalities at the March 11th Inaugural Southwestern Ontario Clean Council Meeting.
- Collaboration facilitates human resources and knowledge transfer, as well as resources from businesses and foundations through to the provincial and federal governments.

Southwestern Ontario Municipal Clean Air and Climate Change Announcements

Mayor Michael Harding, City of Woodstock

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- Biodiesel being used in entire Woodstock fleet, starting with 5% and planning to increase percentage after pilot.
- Woodstock is one of 7 municipalities participating in the E3 Fleet Challenge where fleet staff receive driver training to reduce fuel consumption.
- Woodstock is part of the provincial Count Me In Challenge that is launching on June 3rd.
- Woodstock is proud to be a signatory to the 2009 Southwestern Ontario Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air (link to SWO-CAC Declaration)

Controller Gina Barber, City of London

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- Implementing London's Air Quality Action Plan since 2003.
- In the process of improving London's Anti-Idling Bylaw.
- Launching a public consultation process to develop a community energy conservation and renewable energy plan.
- Launching London Zero-Footprint calculator to help London residents better understand their carbon footprint and provide them with an opportunity to participate in locally sourced offsets.
- Launching and Eco-mobility program in two London communities over the summer.
- In the process of revising London's Transportation Master Plan.
- Partnering with London home development community to develop a green development standard.

Councillor Terry Burrell, City of Sarnia

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- Sarnia is moving towards a greener economy.
- The City has Canada's largest solar farm, a new biofuels refinery, and a new green refining company that will as an example turn tires into diesel fuel.
- Sarnia produces certified organic compost from organic waste.

Mayor Stephen Molnar, Town of Tillsonburg

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- Would like to commend Oxford County for their LEED County building in which meeting was held.
- Tillsonburg is pleased to be a signatory to the 2009 Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Council declaration.
- Tillsonburg is focusing on greening its fleet and developing a comprehensive and integrated Trail System Master Plan. The Plan will not only be a recreational trail plan but will provide a viable active transportation corridor for commuting within Tillsonburg.
- Developing a revitalization plan that will increase residential densities within downtown core.

Signatories to the Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Council 2009 Inter-Governmental Declaration on Clean Air include:

- City of London
- City of Windsor
- City of Woodstock
- Town of Tillsonburg
- Town of Goderich

Southwestern Ontario Clean Air Summit Best Practices Exchange

Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Energy Management Tools and Resources, Scott Vokey

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- It is important to manage energy use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce operating costs, increase productivity, comply with Green Energy Act, and enhance the municipal brand. Some of the tools available to help include:
 - EMT – Energy Management Tool;
 - LAS Interval Meter Program.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), Green Municipal Funds and Partners for Climate Protection Campaign, Eva Ligeti, GMF Advisory Board Member

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- The Green Municipal Fund gives out grants and low-interest loans and provides information through the Knowledge Management unit.
- There are three funding streams: Plans (grants to develop project plans), Studies (grants to conduct studies of projects/field tests), Projects (grants and loans for the funding of an actual project).
- Funding is provided in five sectors: brownfields, energy, transportation, waste and water – criteria available on FCM website.
- Grant of 50% of total eligible costs, up to \$350,000 - \$6 to \$8 million per year; \$70 million in loans available per year.
- Project example of Blue Mountains, Ontario which received \$250,000 for an Integrated Sustainable Community Plan.
- Project example of East Gwillimbury, Ontario which received \$129,000 for a Community Energy Plan. The Town is balancing growth with emissions and resources reduction.
- The GMF provides loans to private sector projects as long as the municipality is a partner and benefits from the project.
- The process has become more user-friendly and streamlined – competition and deadlines have been removed from the process, and there is a shorter approval time with simplified application documents.
- Message: a small amount of money can leverage a lot of positive action.

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Joan Weidner, Senior Transportation and Environmental Planner

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- SEMCOG – Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, a local government organization that represents half of state population.

- In air quality planning, SEMCOG develops cost-effective strategies, works on implementation and public education.
- US National Clean Air Act's Six Criteria Pollutants: ozone, particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur oxides; standards are set by EPA which every region must attain.
- Non-attainment regions must make plans with legally enforceable actions – good situation in SEMCOG because good working relationship with state legislature.
- The Air Quality Planning Process includes data analysis, estimates of needed emissions reductions, impacts and additional needed emissions reductions; then emissions control options are analyzed, selected, monitored.
- Discussion of ozone reduction trends in Southeast Michigan, issue of air shed transfer of emissions from out of region.
- Standards for air quality are reviewed every 5 years by the EPA, and keep getting tougher creating continued challenges.
- There is no more low-hanging fruit – meeting new standards is harder and more expensive.
- Climate change action plans now include funds going into state-level greenhouse gas reduction initiatives; vehicle fuel economy standards.
- Possibility of a national cap-and-trade system moving quickly through Congress, may be in place before the end of the year.
- Many state and local government-level energy and building efficiency initiatives; renewable energy activities.

Sarnia Lambton Environmental Association (SLEA): Long-Term Monitoring of Air Quality in Sarnia-Lambton, Dean Edwardson, General Manager

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- There is a high concentration of industry along the St.Clair River.
- Air quality has been measured in Sarnia Lambton region for the last 50 years.
- Air quality stations are very expensive – each one is about \$250,000.
- It is always a challenge to figure out where to site an air quality station- we also have a mobile station that is used to gather readings from a variety of locations.
- There has been a reduction in VOCs, Benzene, Xylene over the last 20 years. SO₂ is still higher than other communities and an oil refinery is undertaking a \$100 million dollar tailgas cleaning retrofit to address that.
- Sarnia experiences higher concentrations of PM_{2.5} and Ozone from southerly winds bringing in pollutants from long range transport.

Southwestern Ontario Clean Air and Climate Change Actions and Lessons Learned Roundtable

Doug Quibell, Region of Waterloo

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- Mainly going to address the health department initiatives but there are a lot of other environmental initiatives being undertaken within Waterloo region such as hybrid buses, environmental sustainability office, and LEED buildings for example.
- Waterloo Region has been a part of the GTA-CAC for a number of years and has received a lot of benefits from the collaboration. Waterloo is also part of the Waterloo Partners for Clean Air and we produce an annual progress report on the progress of each of the Partners.
- Undertook a study of drive-thrus.
- Waterloo Region partnered with an ENGO to do idle-free outreach. It was so successful that there are a group of students studying the outcomes. There were three phases to the outreach and the evaluation plan should be available soon. We are looking for funding to take the program to other communities.
- Waterloo Region undertook a Burden of Illness from Air Pollution to understand the local health impacts and health care costs.
- Second annual Ecofest will take place in early June hoping to have it be the biggest Ecofestival in Canada in the coming years.
- Developing an Environmental Health report that looks at more than air quality but all environmental health implications. Should be available by the fall of 2009.

Jay Heaman, Woodstock Hydro

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- Woodstock Hydro focuses on customer engagement, and challenging and empowering customers.
- 1 kWh = 2lb CO₂ – a good way of looking at personal emissions.
- Woodstock had Voluntary Blackout Day, now annual, as well as a raffle for a 1 Kw PV system.
- Electric distribution utilities must think outside the box, be pro-active and innovative within the community.

Allison Cook, City of London

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- The Business Travel Wise Program helps companies discuss commuter options with employees, and provides a Ride Match service.

- London is funding a study on how Londoners commute around the city, and is planning a feasibility study of inter-community transit in and out of the city.

Carrie Musselman, City of Kitchener

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- Kitchener has an “Annual 5 Best Bets for Air Quality” action plan endorsed through council.
- The fleet has been granted ISO 14001 certification.
- LEED Gold is being implemented for all new municipal buildings.
- Kitchener has a Local Environmental Action Fund.

Jennette Walker, Town of Goderich

- Several lighting upgrade initiatives.
- Union Gas program giving free programmable thermostats.
- Green features on Town Hall renovation including a geothermal heating system.
- Focusing on small actions for better conservation.
- New Environment Coordinator position created to implement and coordinate environment-related work.

Councillor Deborah Haswell, City of Owen Sound

- Stopped use of pesticides on municipal properties.
- AMO and LAS gas bulk programs.
- Has a Transportation Master Plan including a section on trails.
- Has introduced the first bike lane in Owen Sound.
- Energy retrofits of 13 municipal buildings.

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