

ENVIRONMENT WEEK EDMONTON

Highlights

- The Eco-Solar home tour showcased 14 energy-efficient and eco-friendly homes and businesses.
- June 3 was officially proclaimed Clean Air Day.
- Over 130 people attended free tours of the Edmonton Waste Management Centre.
- A guided “sustainability stroll” highlighted sustainable buildings and practices in downtown Edmonton.
- Despite the rain, hundreds of people came out to Rundle Park on June 13 to make River Day a success!

Environment Week 2015 at a Glance

Edmonton was alive with the sound of sustainability for [Environment Week 2015](#). The festivities took place during the week of May 31 to June 7 and there was something for everyone.

The week kicked off a day early with a two-day [Eco-Solar home tour](#). The tour

attracted 3,232 visitors to 14 different homes and businesses that featured a variety of energy-efficient upgrades, such as: solar PV panels, high efficiency appliances, water efficient landscaping and electric vehicles. This year's tour was the biggest one to date.



The Way We Green tent displays alongside the U of A's Office of Sustainability to celebrate World Environment Day on June 5.

Throughout the week, followers of the City of Edmonton's Twitter and Facebook accounts had the chance to receive an energy efficient gift. The #FindWilbert campaign sent out daily clues

challenging citizens to find Wilbert the Owl at sustainable buildings throughout the city.

The [Edmonton Waste Management Centre](#) got involved in the festivities as well; they offered free tours throughout the entire week.

Friday, June 5 was World Environment Day. The City of Edmonton partnered with the University of Alberta's Office of Sustainability to celebrate. Together the organizations engaged over 90 people with popcorn, fun and environmental games.

Overall, Environment Week 2015 shaped up to be an exciting celebration. How will you participate next year?

Celebrating Clean Air with “Green” Art

Edmonton is a growing city; with this growth comes the added pressure of maintaining clean healthy air.

This year, to raise awareness of [Clean Air Day](#) on June 3, the City of Edmonton installed three public art installations: one moss covered bench and two moss covered bikes. Moss was chosen because of its ability to

absorb air pollution and its positive impact on air quality.

The moss art was placed outside City Hall, on the corner of Jasper Avenue and 104 Street and Jasper Avenue and 107 Street.

“The City is very committed to improving Edmonton's air quality and we are actively working with our regional partners to

develop innovative programs to do so,” said Mayor Don Iveson.

“These art installations are an original way to engage Edmontonians and illustrate practical things people can do to help improve our air quality.”

The installations were a huge hit with the public.



The moss bench was part of a series of three public art installations to raise awareness about Clean Air Day, always celebrated on Wednesday during Environment Week.

Solar Social Ignites Interest in Renewable Energy

June 7 was a beautiful day to learn about renewable energy at the Solar Energy and Sustainability Social. The event had a fitting location at the Riverdale Community League rink house, which is equipped with solar panels and a community garden.

The Solar Social was an opportunity for citizens to learn more about renewable energy within the city and other sustainable practices and services. The Social included various exhibitors: the City of Edmonton's City Environmental Strategies, Transportation Services and Master Composter Program;

Sustainable Food Edmonton; and Spark Energy. Exhibitors answered questions and handed out relevant information. Sessions were hosted inside the rink house

where representatives from the Riverdale Community League and invited speakers informed the audience. The sessions covered a range of

topics that included: home solar energy, sustainable food and permaculture.

The Social tied in well with the new *Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy* which calls for the diversification of the City's energy sources, energy efficiency and energy conservation. Events like this are a great opportunity to engage the public and encourage sustainable action.



The Way We Green tent set up at the Solar Social. Other exhibitors included the Master Composter program, Sustainable Food Edmonton, City of Edmonton Transportation Services and Spark Energy.



Mayor Don Iveson presents Mark Brostrom, Director of City Environmental Strategies, with the official proclamation of Clean Air Day.

Mayor Proclaims Clean Air Day

On June 3, Mayor Don Iveson officially proclaimed Clean Air Day in the City of Edmonton. The proclamation was delivered in front of City Hall near a Clean Air Day public art installation. Mayor Iveson was also joined by a class of City Hall School students who enthusiastically chanted "We care about clean air!"

Clean Air Day is recognized annually on the Wednesday of Environment Week. The official proclamation serves to be a reminder of the importance of clean air in Edmonton.

The quality of Edmonton's air is important to discuss, so that we can try to make every day a clean air day. Some days the Capital Region exceeds federally-set air quality limits for fine particulate matter.

A response plan has been developed and the City of Edmonton is taking action to improve Edmonton's air quality, for example: promoting walking and other forms of sustainable transportation and pursuing transit oriented development (TOD). TOD focuses on developing residential and commercial areas around transit stations.

Maintaining healthy air quality in Edmonton requires effort from everyone. From learning how individual activities contribute to air quality to taking action to improve our air, each Edmontonian has an important role to play. For more information visit:

edmonton.ca/cleanairday

Downtown Sustainability Stroll

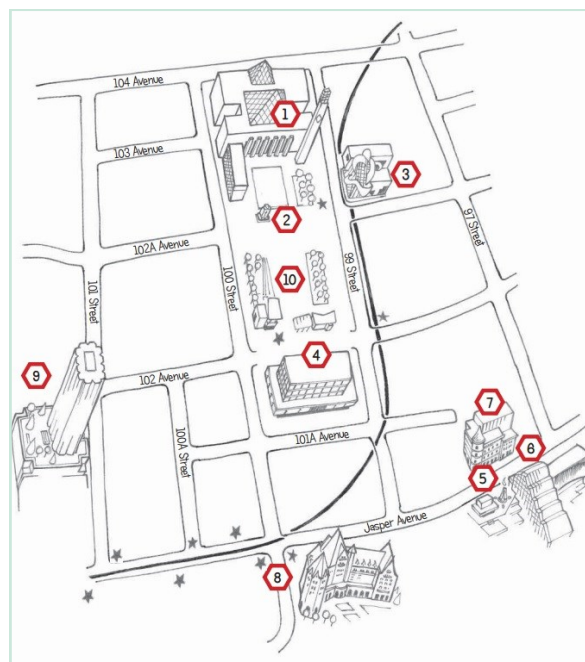
City Environmental Strategies led a walking tour of downtown Edmonton over lunch hour on June 3. The tour highlighted locations that showcase local commitment to green initiatives.

If you're sad that you missed it, don't worry! The tour has been made into an easy-to-follow [brochure](#) that can be found at City Hall and online at: edmonton.ca/thewaywegreen

The stroll is approximately two kilometres long and takes an hour depending on how long you linger at each stop.

Stops include:

1. City Hall
2. Cenotaph outside City Hall
3. Art Gallery of Alberta
4. Edmonton Public Library
5. River Valley Park
6. Shaw Conference Centre
7. Hotel Alberta/CKUA
8. Fairmont Hotel MacDonald
9. Manulife Place
10. Sir Winston Churchill Square



Recognizing City Eco-Innovation

The annual [Charles Labatiuk Award for Environmental Excellence](#) was handed out on Tuesday, June 2. The award, which is named in honour of the late Charles Labatiuk, recognizes City employees who demonstrate environmental leadership.

This year, the award was given to the Fleet Services Engineering Team. The team created a program that tests the emissions of the City's fleet of 950 transit buses. The tests provide critical information about the health of the bus engines and their ability to meet standards set by Environment Canada.

Two other finalists were recognized:

- The Edmonton Valley Zoo Green Team for their dedication to encouraging sustainability both at work and home.
- Jasmine Hestad for her leadership and hard work with the Edmonton Valley Zoo Green Team.

Finalist teams were awarded with a \$300 donation in their team's name to Roots for Trees, which seeks to increase the city's tree canopy.

The winning team was awarded with a commemorative tree, to be planted in their honour in a City park. As well, each member of the winning team received a framed award certificate and gift card.



Members of the 5-Gas Analyzer Emissions Testing Project Team with the General Manager of the Sustainable Development Department



Wilbert the Eco-Wise Owl at the University of Alberta's PAW Centre. The fitness centre features a solar PV system and triple pane glazing.

#FindWilbert

Wilbert the Owl was a busy bird during Environment Week 2015.

Wilbert travelled with the summer students to different sustainable locations within the city and hosted a small scavenger hunt. The first three people to find Wilbert were given an eco-gift and some

background about the sustainable features of the secret location.

The scavenger hunt occurred throughout the city. Some of the locations included: the Southgate LRT station, City Hall and the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre at the U of A.

Eco-Fact or Fiction?

? Energy conservation and energy efficiency are the same thing.

- **Fiction:** *Energy conservation* is an activity that consumes less energy, such as turning off the lights when you leave the room. *Energy efficiency* is an activity that requires less energy to carry out the same task, such as switching incandescent bulbs to LED bulbs.

? Buying organic food instead of conventionally produced local food isn't always the best choice.

- **Fact:** While there are certain benefits to purchasing organic food, such as decreased exposure to pesticides, it is not a simple choice to make. For example, an organic carrot produced in California has to travel a lot further than a conventionally produced carrot in Alberta. The local carrot produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions in transport. So, do you make a decision based on being organic or producing fewer emissions? It's not a simple decision.

? Letting your car idle burns less gas than shutting off the engine and restarting.

- **Fiction:** Today's cars use electronic fuel injectors, which regulate the amount of gas delivered to the

engine when you start the ignition. As a result, almost no gas is wasted and only a small amount is burned when you start the car. If you're going to be stopped for longer than 10 seconds, it is more fuel efficient to shut off your car. (Obviously this rule does not apply in traffic).

? Solar panels only work in warm, sunny climates and won't do well in Alberta because of our cold weather.

- **Fiction:** Edmonton is one of the sunniest places on Earth and has enough sunlight hours to generate the same amount of electricity during a year as a panel installed in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. Furthermore, NAIT recently conducted a study where they tested the efficiency of a snow covered solar panel in comparison to a cleared one. The study concluded that with panels installed at the optimal angle of 53 degrees, the snow covered ones were only 1.63 per cent less efficient. Solar panels are a viable option for renewable energy in Edmonton and across Alberta. Learn more at edmonton.ca/city_government/environmental_stewardship/nait-solar-array-project.aspx

For More Information

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