

Taking Care of Our Environment

A number of City of Toronto programs emphasize environmental protection or stewardship. The focus is on maintaining environmental resources and preventing or repairing damage to the environment.

The natural heritage includes ravines, wetlands, valley and stream corridors, wooded areas, shorelines and other significant physical features.

Ravine Protection

- The City's ravine bylaw regulates human activities that involve cutting trees, dumping fill in ravines, and changing the grade (slope) within ravine protection boundaries. City-wide harmonized bylaw approved in 2002.
- If you wish to determine if your property is affected by the Ravine Protection Bylaw, or if you are looking for more information about the bylaw, information is available on the website at www.toronto.ca/trees. You may also call 416-338-TREE (8733)

More information is available from Urban Forestry at 416-392-1888.

Natural Heritage

- The City's new Official Plan presents policies to protect Toronto's natural heritage system for the long term. The natural heritage system is based on a study that was carried out by the City of Toronto and Toronto and Region Conservation in 2001.
- The natural heritage includes ravines, wetlands, valley and stream corridors, wooded areas, shorelines and other significant physical features. A natural heritage system recognizes the importance of natural features, the functions they provide, and their relationships among one another.
- City Planning is co-ordinating studies to further define important natural heritage features and functions, and to identify appropriate levels of protection.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the 2001 City of Toronto Natural Heritage Study, call City Planning at 416-392-0191.

Reducing Road Salt

- Transportation Services created a Salt Management Plan to manage the use of salt on roads for safety purposes in winter conditions. The result is a significant reduction in the amount of salt used on city roads and sidewalks.
- A recent innovation involves the mixing of salt with water to create a salt brine solution that is applied to roads either as a liquid or mixed with granular salt. The City's use of salt brine returns the roadway to normal driving conditions quickly and is better for the environment than solid salt because it uses less salt.
- In addition, the City has upgraded its equipment, improved its use of weather forecasting information, and provided more training for staff who manage salt resources.

Further information is available from Transportation Services at www.toronto.ca/transportation and 416-392-0285.



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Monitoring Watersheds

- Toronto and Region Conservation monitors water quality, aquatic habitats, groundwater, precipitation and bio-diversity. The data is incorporated into plans for local watersheds and fish management, development/permit reviews, and other reports.
- Among key projects are the Don and Humber watershed plans and report cards, naturalization of the lower Don River, a natural heritage system for the City of Toronto, and efforts involving Port Union Waterfront Park and Tommy Thompson Park.

More information is available from Toronto and Region Conservation at 416-661-6600.

Green Purchasing

- The City of Toronto considers the long-term costs and benefits of the products and services it buys. City Council adopted a policy on responsible procurement in 1999. The policy helps to guide decisions on purchasing .
- The Purchasing and Materials Management Division revised basic specifications for contracts and tenders to place an emphasis on purchasing products and services that contain the maximum level of post-consumer reusable or recyclable content. For example, the City now uses water-based paint for asphalt markings.

The full policy is available on the City's website www.toronto.ca/tenders/index.htm (under the "Policies and Legislation" heading). Information is also available by e-mailing purchasing@toronto.ca or by phoning Purchasing and Materials Management at 416-372-7311.

Toronto Environmental Volunteers

- The Toronto Environmental Volunteers program, run by the City, enlists volunteers throughout the city, expanding their knowledge in solid waste management issues (recycling, composting, organic waste collection), household hazardous waste, energy and water efficiency, wastewater education and air quality.

More information is available at 416-397-4838 and on the website at www.toronto.ca/wes/techservices/involved/outreach/tev.

Experience for Volunteers

- The Environmental Volunteers Network, a partnership project educates diverse volunteers and gives them hands-on work experience in the field of conservation. It also provides non-profit environmental and municipal agencies with ready, willing and able volunteers.

Information is also available from Toronto and Region Conservation at 416-661-6600, extension 5360.

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Environmental Management Systems

- The City is developing opportunities for integrating environmental management systems into the overall management of its operations.

Further details are available from Environmental Services at 416-392-1826.

Tree Protection

- Urban Forestry maintains and protects approximately 500,000 City-owned street trees. Approximately 8,000 trees are planted annually. Opportunities and locations for new tree planting are actively sought out as part of the City's tree planting programs.
- The City's private tree bylaw regulates injury or removal of privately owned trees which measure 30 centimetres in diameter or more. The bylaw also requires replacement tree planting through the development review process or when permits for tree removal are issued.

More information is available from Urban Forestry at www.toronto.ca/trees and 416-338-TREE (8733).

Stewardship Resource Centre

- The Stewardship Resource Centre has more than 750 publications, videos, fact sheets, compact disks and other reference materials for the general public.

Details are available from Toronto and Region Conservation at 416-661-6600, extension 5394.



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