



The Daily Gleaner

Have a Green Harvest!

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The temperature is dropping, the leaves are turning, and the kids are back to school. This could only mean one thing in Fredericton: The Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival is just around the corner! And one goal we can all keep in mind as we enjoy this year's Festival in beautiful downtown Fredericton is to keep our city green and clean and our greenhouse gas emissions low.

The first thing we can do is enjoy the fall days and evenings and walk or bike to festival venues. With tens of thousands of people flocking to the downtown area, parking is hectic and sometimes non-existent. You can help minimize traffic by simply leaving your car at home. And if you live further away, talk to your neighbors, because chances are they're going too, and you can carpool. It might be wise to park out of the downtown core and walk the rest of the way to avoid traffic congestion and unnecessary idling. If you are carpooling, and you're waiting to pick up your passengers, don't idle your car. If you have to wait more than ten seconds, it is more efficient to turn off your engine and start it again. And don't forget that the city buses run every hour too! There's a free festival stage at King's Place, so waiting for the bus can be a magically musical experience. To see the Fredericton Transit schedule online check out www.fredericton.ca/en/transportation/transitschedule.asp

The Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival is a time for seeing great live music, socializing and having fun, so for those who will be enjoying the music with a few drinks, one of the most important things you can do is to reuse your cup. On average each year 60,000 plastic cups are used throughout Festival week. This number can be dramatically decreased by simply handing over your cup for a refill.

Be aware of where you place your trash. There will be big blue recycling barrels at all festival venues for plastic cups and bottles, and garbage barrels too. Inevitably though, some trash won't make it to the can. That's why the Harvest Green Team volunteers will be scoping the venues, picking up cups and garbage, but even they won't be able to get it all. The challenge is on – if you see a cup, pick it up (and trash too)! Little actions like this quickly add up, and all of a sudden Harvest becomes the greenest and cleanest festival around! Not to mention, a little extra community cooperation adds that special touch to this community-run event.

How can we reduce waste at the festival? Use less! If you are buying food from vendors, or ordering take-out, take one napkin with your food – not a pile. If you are buying merchandise, feel free to decline the plastic bag. And if you know you will be buying merchandise ahead of time, be prepared and bring along your cloth bag.

And remember, downtown store and restaurant owners, if you want to welcome festival goers with 'open doors' to your establishment please turn off your air conditioner or heat for the week. This will lower your energy costs and your greenhouse gas emissions!

The 17th Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival is sure to be a major success, as it always is. Last year, the Festival broke the record with over 72,000 admissions, and even more are expected this year. Volunteers, festival patrons, and city staff all commented that, despite record crowds, the 2006 festival was the cleanest in memory. Let's surpass that and make 2007 the cleanest *and* greenest year yet! The leaves might be turning red, but let's work together to make Harvest green!

Jessica Scott formerly worked for the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, and is now studying for her Masters in Environmental Management at UNB in Fredericton. For more information on the Harvest Jazz & Blues Festival's venue locations so you can plan your walking or biking route, check out www.harvestjazzandblues.com and if you are wondering why 'Green Matters' check out www.greenmattersfredericton.com