



The Daily Gleaner

November 1, 2008

Green Shops is Here!

Reduce your Environmental Impact. Improve Your Bottom Line.

Smart Business. For a Smart City.

On Thursday morning, at downtown clothier Robert Simmonds, Fredericton's newest green initiative was launched. **Green Shops** is a made-in-Fredericton environmental program for local businesses under the umbrella of the *Green Matters* campaign.

The ultimate goal of the program is to reduce Fredericton's environmental impact by supporting, promoting and rewarding environmental stewardship within the business community. Participating businesses are encouraged to implement specific actions that simultaneously reduce their environmental impact and operating costs, and advance Fredericton's movement towards being a more environmentally sustainable community. Action items fall into categories such as: transportation, products and services, energy and fuel, waste management, and water conservation.

The program is designed to provide support and guidance yet be flexible enough to apply to all commercial sectors in Fredericton. Through the program's resources (auditing, workbook, advice and support) each participating business will develop its own unique trajectory of environmental commitment.

Considering the pace at which the environment is changing and the mounting scientific evidence showing man as a contributing factor, the phrase "think globally, act locally" has never carried so much weight. The intent of Green Shops is local action by local business for a global result.

And if you think small business can't make a big impact, think again. If you make environmentally minded changes in how you do business – this may just push your suppliers to adjust accordingly, which prompts manufacturers to modify products, and so it goes. Even how you receive your deliveries can make a difference – instead of deliveries every day, can you coordinate them to be every other day to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from delivery trucks? And go further; ask them not to idle when they stop at your shop. Can your suppliers ship with minimal packaging that is recyclable? Can your shop eliminate plastic bags? Consider this, the Capital Bar Complex installed aerators on faucets and low-flow toilets and reduced their water consumption by 15,000 litres per week!

Being a good steward of the environment and our communities, and being an efficient and profitable business, are not mutually exclusive. In fact they are one and the same. This notion is already being evidenced in Fredericton – just ask Avalon Salon Spa or Carmen Creek Golf Course or Fredericton VW – all Gold Medal Green Shops recognized at Thursday's launch.

As is often the case, the wisdom of Dr. Suess prevails. Nearly forty years ago, long before ‘corporate greening’ became popular, he wrote a children’s story called The Lorax. The story chronicles the plight of the environment and the Lorax, who speaks for the trees against the greedy Once-ler, a businessman whose position is: “I meant no harm. I most truly did not. But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I got. I biggered my factory. I biggered my roads. I biggered my wagons. I biggered my loads. . . And I biggered my money which everyone needs.” But before long the Truffula trees are gone, smogulous smoke fills the air, and the water is filled with gluppity-glupp. The Lorax then exits through a hole in the smog and leaves only one thing ‘here in this mess’, a small pile of rocks with the one word . . . “UNLESS”. Well, even now the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear. “UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

Green Shops has great faith that our business community cares a whole awful lot. After all, Radical Edge and Robert Simmonds and Whisco Cleaning Products and Grun-Sol Technologies enjoy growing success and all the while they are recycling and biking to work and changing light bulbs and choosing to sell products with the environment in mind - and they are committing to improve far beyond this! We hope these businesses (and the others mentioned) who are already leaders, will inspire others to join the green revolution. The dream - a Green Shops decal on the door of every business in Fredericton. In our increasingly green-minded city, this seems like another great beginning!

If you would like more information or would like to sign up to become a Green Shops member, email Ashley Gray or Alycia Morehouse at greenshops@fredericton.ca, or call 460-2777.

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