

Province applauds Shelburne's energy conservation efforts

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The efforts of Shelburne residents and organizations to make a positive impact on the environment through their energy use is attracting attention.

Last week, Ontario's chief energy conservation officer, Peter Love, came to town to recognize local efforts to both conserve energy and create renewable energy sources.

Love congratulated the community for reducing electrical consumption by five per cent over the summer months through the Reduce the Juice conservation program.

"Achieving a five per cent reduction in a little more than two months is remarkable," said Love. "Especially since the provincial government plans to take five years to achieve this degree of energy efficiency."

The Reduce the Juice team trained students in home energy conservation strategies and encouraged Shelburne citizens to use electricity more efficiently through door to door surveys, promotional events and in home energy audits.

"Our goal was to show people in Shelburne that they could save money and help reduce smog at the same time. And they certainly rose to the challenge," says project manager Theresa Sauren. Over 78 per cent of the people contacted by the student teams agreed to reduce their electricity use.

"Simple things like using more compact fluorescent bulbs or replacing an older, energy wasting fridge really add up when everybody works together," says Sauren.

Shelburne mayor Ed Crewson praised the project and volunteers.

"Your enthusiasm and dedication have helped the Shelburne community to become more environmentally responsible and it inspires us all," he said.

The Reduce the Juice program was initiated and designed by Power Up Renewable Energy Co-operative (PURE), a Dufferin County based community group. PURE is also responsible for initiating the Green Power Project at Centre Dufferin District high school, a 1.5 kW wind and solar system installed on the roof of the school which is currently supplying electricity to the Ontario electricity grid.

Love presented a certificate of recognition to Jeff Wellman, a teacher who championed the installation of the renewable energy system.

"The Green Power Project shows that community-based initiatives can make a real change and that schools can lead by example in the community," said Love. "I salute all who have been involved."

Through the Green Power Project students learn about energy choices, future energy technologies and methods of energy conservation.