

March 27, 2012

What on earth are you doing for Earth Hour?

Watch and you'll be surprised...maybe even inspired.

City co-op student Amanda Taylor was on the street and roaming City Hall with a video camera last week asking: *"What are you planning to do for Earth Hour?"* To hear what people are planning – from romance, time with friends and listening to frog songs – check out the video, set to be on the City's YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/CityofCampbellRiver>) by Mar. 29. A link will also be posted on the City's Facebook page, and on the website (www.campbellriver.ca) under What's New.

This year's Earth Hour lights-out event is Saturday, Mar. 31 between 8:30 and 9:30 pm. Hosted by the World Wildlife Fund, Earth Hour is the world's largest voluntary action for the environment. During this time, communities world-wide will turn off their lights to demonstrate action to address climate change.

According to the World Wildlife Fund, in 2011, more than 5,200 cities and towns in 135 countries worldwide switched off their lights for Earth Hour.

City-run buildings will have all lights off that are non-essential for public safety, and City leaders are turning their lights out at home, too.

"I will be visiting family in the Lower Mainland and will be participating in Earth Hour," says City Councillor Larry Samson, environmental liaison. *"This one hour of attention, awareness and action is an important step in recognizing the importance of sustainability in our world."*

Campbell River's City Manager Andy Laidlaw pledges to turn off his lights and reduce heat consumption for Earth Hour, and emphasizes that this annual event will also serve as a time of reflection on how he can reduce his energy consumption year-round. Fewer vehicle trips are also an important goal for the City Manager.

"Although it may seem like a small step, to turn off lights for one hour, it is through this action that we become aware of our dependence on energy and our need to conserve it and produce it responsibly," Laidlaw says.

"I want to use this event to help demonstrate to my children how the little things we do in our day-to-day lives can add up to make a difference," adds Ron Neufeld, the City's general manager of operations. *"What is really important though is to make sure that the good ideas and actions that we do through events like Earth Hour become part of our daily routine."*

In 2010, Campbell River electricity consumption fell by two per cent during Earth Hour. Last year, however, the community increased consumption by 1.7 per cent.

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Contact: Amber Zirnhelt, Sustainability Manager

250-286-5742