

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the District of Houston's application for the Community Energy Association's 2007 Energy Aware Award.

As stewards and leaders of the community, the District of Houston firmly believes that a sustainable community is nurtured through development and progress that not only effects economics, but also quality of life and protection of the environment. The District has a long-standing commitment to local and global environmental protection and conservation - a way of thinking that has been gaining momentum in recent years. Mayor and Council are continually looking for ways to accelerate their commitment, ensuring that environmental footprint considerations are a component of community decisions - both by the District itself and that of its citizens, businesses and visitors. All the while, Council is actively seeking solutions to promote healthy lifestyles.

As a small, northern community with limited financial means, the District of Houston's focus is ON-THE-GROUND initiatives that make a difference to quality of life for residents, all the while ensuring that our environmental impact leaves a pristine and sustainable community for our children. Current "green" initiatives include:

1. Geothermal heating of the new pool - commissioned in 2006
2. Geothermal heating and ice refrigeration for both the arena and curling rinks - 2007/08
3. District energy system - a revenue-generating, long-term utility
4. Energy Centre of the North - a demonstration model of key "green" building technologies
5. Heat recovery from the sewer treatment plant, heating the public works building
6. Community Action on Energy Efficiency initiatives
7. Arena "Live Sites" upgrade
8. Community "Local Motion" walking / bicycling trails
9. "Green" bylaw upgrades including, a) official community plan amendments for sustainable living land-use, b) clean air bylaw, c) nuisance bylaw and d) revised water bylaw with water meter provisions
10. Municipal woodstove exchange program - to financially entice compliance with the clean air bylaw - for the elimination of non-certified solid fuel burning appliances by 2010
11. Industry's compliance by decommissioning their beehive burners by 2007 - replaced by a pellet plant and bark energy system
12. District composting program
13. Greening with street trees program - 200 mature trees planted in 2006 alone
14. Financial sustainability focus through a responsible asset management program and Community Forest initiative
15. New seniors housing centre and announcement for 24/7 healthcare starting in 2007
16. "Green" storm water system