

## Reduce electricity vampires in your home by attending workshops

By Richard Ehrlich  
Caledon Clean Air  
Clean Energy Program

You already know that you can save energy and cut down on smog and greenhouse gases by switching to compact fluorescent lighting, buying energy-efficient appliances, reducing heat and air conditioning, putting your pool on a timer, buying clean energy and planting trees.

The next step is to go after the invisible energy vampires in your home!

A surprising number of small household appliances use energy all the time, even when switched off. This is called a "phantom load." If an appliance is warm, it's wasting energy. These loads can add up to 10-20% to your energy bill. In the U.S.

alone, phantom loads waste more than \$1 billion of power annually.

Most people don't realize that when most electronics are turned off, they stay in standby mode, consuming power. Older TVs and VCRs can draw more power when turned off than some new ones use when turned on! When you add up the satellite receiver, DVD player and other items in your entertainment centre, you may be paying for 100 Watts, 24 hours a day, even if you only watch one TV program!

You can connect multiple devices to a power bar or surge protector, then turn one switch off when not in use. If you need to leave the VCR or satellite receiver on to record programs, put the other devices on a second

power bar that you can turn off. The extra investment in power bars will pay off quickly. New homes should be designed with a single switch to turn off the entire entertainment centre easily.

An older fridge or TV in the basement can be a real energy hog 24 hours a day. Pull the plug on anything you can live without! If you go on vacation, unplugging appliances will save energy and protect you from power surge damage. To save more money, think about everything that you could turn off at the breaker or unplug while away. Turning off your well pump can prevent floods if a pipe bursts, and there's no sense keeping your water heater tank hot for a week. Unplugging appliances such as dryers can reduce your fire risk too.

Computers can be big energy vampires. Older models can draw more than 100 watts when left on, and systems can have a significant phantom load when turned off due to the speakers, printers, modems, routers, wireless devices and hubs that may still be humming. A computer system can draw as much power as a modern refrigerator, and computer game systems can use considerable energy too.

Both at home and at work, put your computer components on a surge protector power bar, and turn it off when not needed. This saves energy and money, and reduces the chance of damage due to power surges. By disconnecting yourself from the Internet, you also reduce the risk of viruses or remote hacking.

Another obvious energy vampire is anything with a

clock. In our kitchen alone, there are clocks on the coffee maker, stove, radio, microwave and breadmaker. Transformers are more subtle vampires. These little black boxes have multiplied in the last few years as we plug in battery chargers for our cell phones, power tools, iPods, cordless phones and laptop computers. Most of these devices don't need to be on 24 hours a day. I did a search in our house, and ended up unplugging the rarely-used basement cordless phone, four different battery chargers, the coffee maker and a radio, along with three other AC adapters.

The best - and most fun - way to discover these vampires is with a power meter. Windy Hills Caledon is running a series of workshops on Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy from

### Info session for kindergarten for special needs

On Wednesday, February 7, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board will host a Kindergarten Entry Planning Information Night. This meeting is for parents of children with special needs which effect their learning, such as vision, hearing, physical, developmental or autism, who are entering junior or senior kindergarten in September 2007. The meeting will be held at the Catholic Education Centre from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information about this session, parents can contact the resource secretary for their school at 905-890-1221.

## Town's green fund helps local groups achieve their goals

In 2006, the Community Green Fund awarded funding for six local environmental projects: a Caledon community map; an outdoor environmental classroom at James Bolton Public School; COOL Caledon public education; a Humber River naturalization project; an outdoor environmental education pilot program at Belfountain Public School; and a spring pesticide exchange.

"These projects have involved over 100 volunteers; engaged more than 1,000 residents; educated 600 school children; cultivated over 20 partnerships and leveraged approximately \$125,000 in funding and in-kind assistance," said Mayor Marolyn Morrison.

Once the spring Pesticide Exchange and the Humber River Naturalization Project occur, thousands of litres of pesticides will be diverted from landfill; wetlands and wildlife habitat will be restored; hundreds of native tree species and shrubs will be re-introduced, and water quality will be improved. These deliverables are significant given the small amount of seed money available in the Community Green Fund.

Furthermore, by supporting community environmental projects that are aligned with Town environmental policies, the Town will be assisted in achieving some of its environmental objectives.

The Community Green Fund was included as an immediate action in the Town of Caledon's Environmental Progress Action Plan. This plan was

endorsed by council in June 2005, and council approved the fund for the 2006 budget.

The Green Fund is intended to assist local, not-for-profit or volunteer-based groups leverage provincial, federal or other funds to carry out important environmental work. The fund awards two types of grants: fast track or project funding. Fast track applications cannot exceed \$1,000 and will be for smaller projects or events with time constraints. Project funding applications cannot exceed \$5,000 and will be distributed as fee for service or in a program delivery manner. An application deadline for 2007 has yet to be announced.

For more information about the Community Green Fund, visit [www.caledon.ca](http://www.caledon.ca) or contact Sara Peckford, environmental progress officer, 905-584-2272, ext. 4269.

L. ANNE WELWOOD

and staff welcome

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ASSOCIATE LAWYER

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Kenneth Zaiss, B.A., L.L.B., will be developing his practice at Welwood Law Offices in the areas of Real Estate, Corporate and Commercial. He brings to the firm a wealth of experience and knowledge in these fields, as well as a previous, award-winning, track record in business, sales and client service.

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January to March. They will have power meters to lend, along with detailed instructions for their use. For information, call 905-522-2959 or visit [www.windyhillscaledon.org](http://www.windyhillscaledon.org). You may also borrow a power meter kit and documentation from any Caledon library through the COOL Caledon Energy

Detective project.

For more information about this or other topics in the Caledon Clean Air Clean Energy Program, please contact us at [cca@caledoncountyside.org](mailto:cca@caledoncountyside.org) or 905-584-6221. Previous articles in this series are available at [www.caledoncountyside.org/g/stepup.htm](http://www.caledoncountyside.org/g/stepup.htm).

## Ice fishing is under way

"Our lake has frozen over, the heated ice huts and the augers are out, the cross-country skiing trails are snow covered and it's time for some great skiing and winter fishing," said Bill Lidster, supervisor of conservation areas for Credit Valley Conservation.

Island Lake's over 400 acres of lake offers ice-fishing, a skating rink, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. A stone's throw from Caledon, Island Lake is popular with both the serious angler and angling families. The park also has plenty of parking and washrooms.

Open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Island Lake has 22 very comfortable heated ice fishing huts available for rent. On weekends the BBQ and snack and tackle shop are open as well. Call 1-800-367-0890 or 519-941-6329 for reservations. Please call ahead for current ice conditions.

## Windy Hills Caledon Renewable Energy

### SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP LISTING

The following workshops have been funded by a grant from the Province of Ontario's Community Conservation Initiative Fund. All events are free and open to the public—if you are interested in attending any or all of the events or wish to get more information, please contact Jen Heneberry, Operations Coordinator at [info@windyhillscaledon.org](mailto:info@windyhillscaledon.org). These dates MAY be subject to change, so please check our website at [www.windyhillscaledon.org](http://www.windyhillscaledon.org) for the most up-to-date information on dates and locations.

### WORKSHOPS

These are in-depth workshops that go in a greater level of detail about how to investigate and determine if a home system is right for your location—workbooks and tools will be provided, along with access to equipment that will be useful for those starting this process. All of these workshops will be the same, they are just held in different locations throughout Caledon.

### Saturday February 10th, 9AM-12PM

Caledon Community Complex  
6215 Old Church Street, Caledon East

### Tuesday February 27th, 6-9 PM

Caledon Village Place and Library  
18313 Hwy 10 (Hurontario Street), Caledon

### Wednesday March 21st, 6-9PM

Albion Bolton Community Centre  
150 Queen St S, Bolton

### Steve Eng, Enviro-Energy Technologies

—determining if a home renewable energy system is right for you

#1 – Alton Library, Wednesday, February 21st, 6-9

35 Station Street, Alton

#2 – Albion Bolton Community Centre,

Thursday March 1st, 6-9, 150 Queen St S, Bolton

#3 – Inglewood Community Centre, Thursday

March 22nd, 6-9 - 15825 McLaughlin Road, Caledon ON

### John Gilbert – solar hot water installations

Albion Bolton Community Centre,  
Wednesday February 14th, 6-9 – 150 Queen St S, Bolton

For more information on these seminars, please visit the Windy Hills Caledon Renewable Energy website at [www.windyhillscaledon.org](http://www.windyhillscaledon.org) or contact Jen Heneberry, Operations Coordinator, 905.522.2959 or by email at [info@windyhillscaledon.org](mailto:info@windyhillscaledon.org).