

Marketing Conservation and D

Toronto Hydro-Electric System Ltd. (Toronto Hydro) has had considerable success with its conservation programs, including the first-of-its-kind in Canada, "2006 Summer Challenge" for residential customers. More than 28 per cent of eligible residential and small commercial customers reduced their electricity use by at least 10 per cent, compared to the previous year. In return they received an additional 10 per cent credit on their fall bill, doubling their savings.

The second "made-in-Toronto program" is *peaksaver*TM, which is a demand-reduction program. Once a customer registers, a *peaksaver*TM switch is installed on the central air conditioning unit. When the switch is activated remotely by Toronto Hydro, the unit will "cycle down" by 50 per cent, reducing the load on the electricity system for several hours. Currently, Toronto Hydro is able to reduce demand by 40 megawatts when *peaksaver*TM is activated, equivalent to taking 13,000 homes off the grid. More than 40,000 customers are already enrolled, and sign-ups are continuing at a good pace.

These programs received provincial recognition when the Premier and the Minister of Energy announced that they'd be rolled out province-wide in 2007 by the Ontario Power Authority.

Toronto Hydro has been aggressively promoting conservation and demand management (CDM) to the commercial sector as well. Though businesses are only

20 per cent of Toronto Hydro's customer base, they account for up to 80 per cent of electricity use. In an effort to promote load reductions in commercial buildings, Toronto Hydro kicked off a new summer conservation campaign with a tongue-in-cheek "fashion show," showcasing how to dress for work when your company is taking conservation seriously in the summer by keeping workplace temperatures a little warmer, thereby using less air conditioning.

The "Fashion Thrills Without the Chills" show (in a downtown Toronto office tower) was the official launch of the first-in-Canada Summer Challenge for Business, which rewards business customers with a 10 per cent credit on their fall bills if they reduce consumption by 10 per cent between July and August, compared to last summer. Businesses don't need to sign up; they just need to start conserving. All commercial customers are eligible, from small local corner stores to leading property management companies that operate the skyscrapers in the heart of the city's financial district.

The Summer Challenge for Business marketing material, building on the theme "Do The Right Thing Toronto," featured testimonials from many businesses that are taking the Summer Challenge for Business and have made a

commitment to conservation. The campaign involved direct mail, elevator door wraps, newspaper advertising inserts and radio commercials, all targeting the business community.

Marketing and public relations materials for the summer conservation campaign also highlight business customers who are "walking the talk" when it comes to cutting electricity use. Titled "Green Profiles," the campaign features a variety of Toronto businesses that are stepping up to Summer Challenge, have a *peaksaver*TM switch, have invested in energy-efficient technology or practice conservation in day-to-day operations, achieving real load reductions.



The Summer Challenge for Business campaign encourages businesses throughout the city to reduce their use of electricity because "it's the right thing to do."

(Ad image courtesy of Toronto Hydro)

The efforts these companies are making, including details about their operations, are featured through a variety of media, including

Demand Management to

Toronto Hydro's Customers

radio and print advertisements, Toronto Hydro's Web site, customer newsletters, and weekly "Conservation Customer of the Week" news releases. Customers profiled so far include Ed's Real Scoop Ice Cream Parlour, West Side Cycle, Mountain Equipment Coop, Exclusive Paints, Bloor West Business Improvement Area, the University of Toronto and Yorkdale Mall.

Toronto Hydro also continues to promote all of its programs using grassroots public relations tactics at community events and festivals, including City Environment Days, The Taste of the Danforth, Buskerfest, Fresh Wednesdays, Tasty Thursdays and special "guerilla marketing" street events at downtown office towers.

With its eight-foot roving "Talk Box," a type of speakers' corner, Toronto Hydro's "Feet

on the Street" team is talking to Torontonians about conservation and electricity, and inviting them to leave messages (such as what they think about conservation, what they're doing to conserve, and who's doing great, or not so great) on the 'Talk Box.' Participants that leave a message receive a free compact fluorescent bulb and might end up seeing themselves on

Toronto Hydro's Web site. Consumer education material about all of Toronto Hydro's CDM programs is available at these events as well.

All of these campaigns complement one another and work to build Toronto Hydro's brand and conservation and demand management profile. Tying the entire communications plan together are outdoor billboards featuring compact fluorescent lightbulbs, comparing them to inefficient incandescent bulbs with the "Use It/Lose It" tagline. These billboards are located throughout the city, maintaining momentum and reinforcing Toronto Hydro's action-oriented conservation messages.



million compact fluorescent bulbs in Toronto homes through giveaways, coupons and incentives. The company also has retired over 50,000 strings of old, inefficient incandescent festive lights through various events, and collected and recycled over 18,000 old room air conditioners through the Keep Cool program. In just two years, Toronto Hydro

has saved over 206 million kilowatt-hours and 54 megawatts.

This commitment to communication with customers and the news media has enabled the company to build a strong CDM brand and quickly become "one of the leading conservation utilities in Canada," according to the Globe and Mail.

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Toronto Hydro-Electric System Limited is one of the largest municipal electric distribution utilities in Canada, delivering electricity to a broadly diversified, economically robust, residential, commercial and industrial customer base in the City of Toronto. The utility serves more than 676,000 customers.