



Town of Richmond Hill

P.O. Box 300  
225 East Beaver Creek Road  
Richmond Hill, Ontario  
Canada L4C 4Y5  
(905) 771-8800  
[www.richmondhill.ca](http://www.richmondhill.ca)

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Contact: Mayor Dave Barrow  
(905) 771-2493

## **RICHMOND HILL HOPES TO BE LEFT IN THE DARK ON GLOBAL PROJECT**

*The Town of Richmond Hill will be participating in Earth Hour 2009 and wants to hear what you're doing!*

RICHMOND HILL – Town of Richmond Hill is hoping to be left in the dark on a global initiative...and want you to join them! That's right, the Town will be turning off all unnecessary lighting at Town-operated facilities in support of Earth Hour 2009 on Saturday, March 28 from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. and are asking you to do the same.

Richmond Hill is a leader in implementing energy-saving initiatives throughout its business practices like solar panels at the Municipal Offices, use of geothermal heating at the *Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts*, purchasing hybrid vehicles and implementing an anti-idling policy to name a few. Participating in Earth Hour is yet another great way to demonstrate its commitment to the environment.

The Town is also encouraging all residents, businesses and organizations to switch off their lighting and all non-essential appliances during this one hour in support of energy conservation, an important action in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that have been linked to climate change. And if you're planning on participating then, new this year, the Town wants you to share your Earth Hour plans and ideas with them as well as with the rest of the community by posting it on its Website at [www.richmondhill.ca/earthhour](http://www.richmondhill.ca/earthhour).

"We know our residents care greatly for the environment as demonstrated by their overwhelming acceptance of new waste reduction programs like the Green Bin organics recycling," said Mayor Barrow. "For Earth Hour last year, Richmond Hill decreased its use of electricity by 3.58 percent. If everyone does just a little more this year it will make a big difference," added the Mayor.

Earth Hour began as a collective effort in Sydney, Australia initiated by the World Wildlife Fund in 2007 to inspire people to take action on climate change. It has since turned into a global movement with 50 million people from more than 35 countries participating last year. This year, it is expected that 1 billion people worldwide will take part.

Although every effort will be made to maximize the Town's participation in Earth Hour, it will not be possible to turn off all lights due to public safety reasons. However all other lighting will be switched off during Earth Hour at the Municipal Offices (*225 East Beaver Creek Road*) and Operations Centre (*1200 Elgin Mills Road*).

For more on Earth Hour 2009 and what the Town is doing, the public is invited to attend a special presentation at the beginning of the Council Meeting on March 23 at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. For ideas on how you can participate in Earth Hour or to submit your own, visit [www.richmondhill.ca/earthhour](http://www.richmondhill.ca/earthhour).

*\*Please see attached Backgrounder: 25 ways to mark Earth Hour 2009 for more information.*



## Backgrounder: 25 ways to mark Earth Hour 2009

Earth Hour is a global WWF climate change initiative. Individuals, businesses, governments and communities are invited to turn out their lights for one hour on Saturday March 28, 2009 at 8:30 PM to show their support for action on climate change.

### *Here are some ideas for how to spend the hour:*

1. Attend local Earth Hour events - or organize one. Add your event, or get details on events near you at [Events.EarthHourCanada.org](http://Events.EarthHourCanada.org).
2. Go outside and look at the stars.
3. Find a great viewing spot to see your town or city go dark at 8:30 p.m.
4. Take pictures and post them to the Earth Hour Facebook page.
5. Go for a lantern walk through a park.
6. Patronize local restaurants and businesses taking part in Earth Hour.
7. Gather your family or friends for a candle-lit dinner.
8. Meet your neighbours at a street or block party.
9. Have an acoustic music jam.
10. Talk to your children about how much electricity your family uses. Brainstorm ways to reduce it.
11. Tell ghost stories.
12. Listen to the birds, bats or other wildlife.
13. Play flashlight tag.
14. Turn your thermostat down by 1 degree. And leave it there.
15. Play Pictionary with glow-in-the-dark markers.
16. Change all your light bulbs to energy-efficient versions.
17. Have a night game of shinny with a glow-in-the-dark puck or ball (wear reflective vests).
18. Take a walk in the moonlight.
19. Have a candlelit bath.
20. Put a glow stick on your dog's collar or leash and go for a walk.
21. Toast marshmallows over a tea light candle.
22. Get out your Ouija board.
23. Have a wine or scotch tasting in the dark.
24. Get out the sleeping bags and camp out on the living room floor.
25. Make a list of ways you could reduce your energy consumption every hour of every day.

*\*Information courtesy of the World Wildlife Fund Canada at: [http://wwf.ca/earthhour/25\\_ways\\_to\\_mark\\_earth\\_hour\\_2009.cfm](http://wwf.ca/earthhour/25_ways_to_mark_earth_hour_2009.cfm)*