

REAL *update*

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL)

FEB 2013

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Best choice in household lighting: CFLS or LEDS?

Most people's preferred choice of lighting today may still be the CFL – the compact florescent light bulb. But the gap is closing with its closest competitor in terms of energy efficiency—the light emitting diode, LED. The newer LEDs last longer than CFLs, use a little less energy, brighten instantly, and are not affected by frequently turning them off and on.



CFLS contain about 4 to 5 mg of toxic mercury, which can be harmful to humans and the environment if bulbs are not disposed of properly. But they are a big improvement over incandescents, as a power plant emits four times the airborne mercury to produce the electricity to power an incandescent bulb compared to a CFL. But CFLs have a slightly higher environmental impact than LEDs, because LEDs contain no toxic materials, and can go straight into the regular garbage once used. There is a small amount of aluminum, however, contained in LEDs.

What's the downside to LEDs then? The choice between CFLs and LEDs, for now, appears to be financial and partly aesthetic. LEDS are still more expensive—a 55 watt LED spotlight, for example, costs about \$45, before taxes, a dimmable 40W bulb \$24, pre-tax. A few years ago the styles of both LEDs and CFLs were quite limited. Today both are offering more variety. Both are becoming less expensive and require no special fixtures. If you can afford to spend the extra money, you'll end up even or better in the long run with LEDs over CFLs; and the environmental impact will be less.

It is clear that to reduce the total environmental impact of lighting, we need to be collecting all types of 'dead' lightbulbs to be shipped to proper facilities for reclaiming the materials they are made from, just as we are doing with other materials.



REAL has an opening on its seven-member Board of Directors. We are looking for an energetic, experienced person with the time and energy to help protect our local environment. If you are connected to the community, are familiar with current and emerging environmental issues, and are motivated to do something about them, join a

group of like-minded people to make a REAL difference.

A link to a position description is available at www.REALaction.ca. Interested candidates should e-mail info@REALaction.ca explaining why they would be interested in becoming a REAL board member.



Recycling Alcoholic Beverage Containers

The Ontario Deposit Return Program (ODRP), a recycling partnership between the LCBO and The Beer Store (TBS), has been in effect since 2007. It charges a fee for each alcoholic beverage container sold in Ontario, and returns the deposit to the consumer when the container is returned to The Beer Store. The deposit fee is 10 cents for glass, PET, tetrapak or Bag-in-a-Box containers up to 630 mls, and 20 cents for those same containers over 630 ml. Cans up to 1 L are charged a 10 cents deposit, and cans over 1 L a 20 cent deposit. Weird fact: The LCBO earns \$10 million a year from the deposits on containers that are not returned.



BAGITBACK.CA

ONTARIO DEPOSIT RETURN PROGRAM

Between May 2011 and May 2012, 1.81 billion (yes that's billion not million) beer bottles and cans were returned to TBS, a 94% return rate. Across Ontario 301 million wine and liquor bottles and assorted containers were returned, resulting in an 81% return rate. Cans had an 80% return rate, PET 48% and Tetrapaks just 2%.

But where are all those beverage containers you return to The Beer Store going?

Glass: Regular sized beer bottles are washed and reused an average of 15 times before being crushed. Eleven breweries have their bottles sorted, saved and returned to them for refilling. The 42 imported beer brands sold in Ontario use only single-use bottles. Glass that is to be crushed is sorted into clear and coloured at The Beer Store. The crushed glass or cullet goes to the Owens-Illinois plant in Brampton, where it is made into new bottles. Some of the coloured glass goes to Owens-Corning, another Ontario company, and is made into pink fibreglass insulation, and some is used to make new coloured bottles. So, no, none of your wine or liquor bottles are being refilled.

Other Returns. Aluminum cans are made into new aluminum sheet and used to make new cans or car parts. Steel caps and bi-metal cans are used to make new steel. The PET from plastic bottles is used by a Canadian recycler, mostly for plastic strapping and automotive parts, while some is sold overseas. The various other returned plastics, such as shrink wrap, bags, six-pack rings, and inner bags from Bag-In-Box, are marketed to processors that make things like shopping bags, plastic lumber and pallets. Paper packaging is combined with higher grade corrugated cardboard and used for boxes, towelling, tissue, wallboard, beer coasters and other products. Aseptic or tetrapaks are much more difficult to recycle because they include layers of paper, plastic and aluminum, so go to specialized facilities where they are pulped so that the plastic and aluminum can be removed.

So our alcoholic beverage containers are being refilled, recycled into the same product, or recycled into other, less valuable products. And much of this takes place right in Ontario. An impressive start.

Suggestions for the environmentally conscious:

- Return ALL your beer, wine and liquor containers and collect your deposit.
- Don't put returnables into your blue box.
- Think twice about imported beer – the bottles aren't refilled.
- If you have a choice, choose clear over coloured glass; it is more likely to be made into new glass.
- Think twice about tetrapaks. They are cheaper environmentally to transport, but not easily recycled.

For more information see The Beer Store's 2012 Stewardship Report

http://www.thebeerstore.ca/sites/default/files/widget/right/2012_TBS%20Stewardship%20Report%20FINAL.pdf
or Chris Cobb's story in the Ottawa Citizen, <http://www.ottawacitizen.com/technology/with+empty/7763045/story.html> .

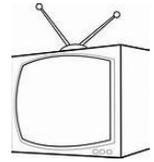
Unusable Stuff - Where does it All Go?

The REAL Deal thanks everyone for thinking of us when they downsize, declutter, remodel, outgrow and move on. Donations of quality, reusable items are a crucial part of the REAL Deal operation. While we continually emphasize what we do and don't take, we still get a few things we can't use mixed up in a load. But we do appreciate that people are taking the effort to pass on what they don't need instead of throwing it away. There are also a few things that despite our best efforts, do not sell. So what do we do with it all?



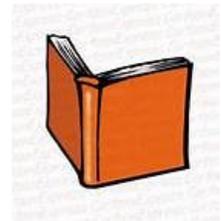
Clothing and Fabric Items. We have never accepted clothing! That includes footwear, hats, belts, purses and other accessories. We take clothing to the Smiths Falls Salvation Army or Jewel's stores. Generally, if people wear it, we don't want it. Exceptions are jewellery, skates and current ski boots. We do not accept bedding or curtains. We occasionally accept throw cushions, throw blankets, and tablecloths. All other fabric items, please take to a charity in your community.

Electronics. We do not take computers or peripherals, televisions, digital cameras, VCRs and so on. If we get them, we pass them on to 2012 Electronics on James Street, Smiths Falls, www.tter.ca. Please just take your used electronics directly there or to a depot closer to you. Very rarely, working electronics are accepted at the manager's discretion.



Toys. In general we say "no" to toys, and do not have a regular contact to give them to. Exceptions are games and puzzles, which we do sell. Unwanted toys are given a chance on the free table. If you have good quality toys, check with other families you know, your church or daycare.

Books. We generally free books that aren't moving, and following that, put them in our blue box for recycling. However, this past summer quite a number of children's books were donated to "Movies Under the Stars" so that children attending the movies in the park on Thursday nights could take home a free book. While we sell many books at the REAL Deal, children's books do not move as quickly.



Suitcases and Medical Items. We accept suitcases, sports bags and knapsacks, sell what we can and pass the excess to other organizations, including "Not Just Tourists". They pack donated medical supplies in suitcases for tourists to take when they travel to needy foreign countries. Medical aids like crutches, bath seats, raised toilet seats are subject to approval. Some may be accepted by Not Just Tourists, notjusttourists.org.

Glasses, Mugs and Plates. This summer we passed on about 12 excess boxes of these to the Ottawa Mission. They can use these at their soup kitchen, or give them to clients setting up households. We always have more of these than we can sell, so will consider other worthy causes as well.



When we've exhausted all other options, including leaving items on the free table, stuff goes to our scrap heap. We periodically load it, and the stuff people just dump when we're not open and that gets ruined by the weather, and ship it to Glenview Iron and Metal for disposal, at a cost of about \$3,000 a year to us. So if an item is not usable or is not something we accept, please do not bring it to us. It costs us time, effort and dollars.

For clarification, please call us at (613) 283-7999, check our website www.REALaction.ca, or drop into the store. For additional options in our area, please consult our Mississippi-Rideau Take it Back Directory at www.recyclopedia.org.

Green Communities Program

Green Communities Canada is a national association of community-based non-profit organizations that deliver innovative and practical environmental solutions to Canadian households and communities. REAL has been a full member of the umbrella organization since 1998. Other Green Communities members located in Ontario include Peterborough Green-Up, Kingston's Hearthmakers Energy Coop, and Thunder Bay's ecoSuperior.

For REAL, being a member has meant opportunities to exchange ideas with other similar organizations,

and share experiences on the challenges of running an environmental organization.



But the biggest advantage of the GCC are the opportunities to develop and deliver programs that REAL could not do on its own. Together, GCC members developed a number of programs REAL has offered, including ecoEnergy for Homes, Well Aware, !RAIN! and Pesticide Free. But there are others, including Active and Safe Routes to School, depave Paradise and ecoDriver that REAL has chosen not to offer. To learn more about GCC programs, see greencommunities.org.



EcoDriver Saves Money and the Environment

To seriously reduce your environmental impact, take a hard look at transportation. For those of us who drive, about half our personal greenhouse gas emissions come from driving. And about 13% of Canada's carbon dioxide emissions are due to cars and light trucks on our roads. Fortunately, there are many "do right now" things to reduce your fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

EcoDriver, an innovative program offered by several Green Communities, promotes fuel-saving behaviours in three areas: fuel-efficient driving, purchasing fuel-efficient vehicles, and driving less. Messages are delivered through a combination of presentations, driver-to-driver workshops, information displays, tire pressure clinics and media events. Financial support has been provided by Natural Resources Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment's Community Go Green Fund. The program has targeted suburban families in twelve Ontario communities, and tests the viability of ecodriving messaging for Canadian drivers. It is anticipated some of these strategies will be adopted by provincial governments, starting with Ontario.

Here is a sampling of some of the messages provided through this program.

Fuel-efficient driving. Most drivers can reduce their fuel consumption by 10-15% by changing their driving habits. Driving slower, combining trips, reducing idling and using a fuel consumption display are a few suggestions. A poorly maintained vehicle can create up to 50% more emissions and use considerably more gas. Maintaining correct tire pressure, keeping a clean air filter, using the proper grade of motor oil, using cruise control, and limiting the use of air conditioning all result in savings.



Buying fuel efficient vehicles. Choosing the right vehicle can make a big difference to your annual emissions, as well as how much you spend on gas. Don't assume that the vehicle class tells all. Among mid-size cars, for example, the most fuel-efficient model in 2008 would cost an estimated \$1,700 a year for gas, while one in the mid-range would cost around \$2,754, a big difference. The program recommends considering your extras carefully. Cargo space, towing capabilities, sun roof and tinted glass are just some of the features affecting fuel efficiency. Be sure to check the enerGuide labels too. You can compare the fuel efficiency ratings for new cars with Natural Resources Canada Fuel Consumption Guide or call 1-800-387-2000 to order your free copy. The NRCan fuel consumption database includes listings for cars and light-duty trucks sold in Canada since 1995. Or maybe you are ready to reduce



EcoDriver Saves Money and the Environment (cont'd)

your fuel consumption by 37% with a hybrid? There are tips on that as well. "EcoDriver Tips for buying a fuel-efficient vehicle" is also available as a downloadable brochure.

Driving less. Choosing to drive less is an obvious but sometimes overlooked way to reduce your fuel consumption. Carpooling, using public transit, walking or biking, and telecommuting are sure ways to reduce your emissions. Added benefits include more time to relax, the opportunity to socialize, and better personal fitness.

Results of the Eco Driver program have been impressive. In a followup survey, 86% of survey respondents reported reduced idling, 69% reported reduced highway speeds, 60% reported reduced hard starts and stops, 52% reported more frequent checking of tire pressure, and 28% reported walking or riding a bike more frequently.

You can benefit from the messages of this program by consulting the websites ecodriver.org, and the [Tools of Change website](#).

Real Deal Store News

The Christmas stuff is finally packed away (and the Valentine's Day stuff is out!) We started putting out our massive accumulation of Christmas items shortly after Halloween, and were putting out even more trees, lights, ornaments, cookware, movies etc. every day up to Sat. Dec. 22, when we closed for the year. For most of December, everything was half price. What was left we put out for free after Christmas, when of course, the collection started again. It's all good fun though. Lots of people love Christmas, the items turn over well as customers like a new look, and we know now to leave lots of storage space in the loft as Christmas donations come in all year long.

This Christmas season we had a Salvation Army Counter Kettle, and were happy to collect donations for all the worthwhile community projects the Salvation Army oversees. Other celebrations of the season included a pizza lunch for volunteers and a Customer Appreciation Day December 22.



Thanks to Bonita Lucas who has been photographing the 15 silent auction items each month, and posting them on our Facebook page. This should be a help to our customers who can't drop in regularly. Our Facebook friends often post examples of repurposing projects on that page as well – so take a look and get inspired! Many of the materials used can be found at the REAL Deal.

We welcome a new volunteer in receiving. Det Kornatz will be assisting at the back on Saturdays.

We are very sorry to be losing one of our long term volunteers. Ed Crawford came to us three years ago, and has been a truly consistent receiving volunteer, and is always polite and in good humour. He arrives faithfully for every shift on time, by bicycle, in all kinds of weather. Ed always has something to say about the state of the world and the government, and is our up-to-the-moment source of information of all that is Smiths Falls, and, we understand, a conduit to the Mayor! We wish Ed all the best in his new position, and continued success with his part-time masonry business.



One last note: donations are always down a little at this time of year. So if you have any quality used items accumulating that you would like to donate to a good cause, now would be a good time. If you are unsure we accept it, or it is very large, please call ahead to (613) 283-7999 and ask for Tracy or Don.

In Memory of Pat Foulkes

We were saddened to learn that Pat Foulkes, a long-time REAL member and keen REAL supporter passed away February 11th. Pat was a true asset to REAL, notably inspiring visual enhancements to our building and our community. Our thoughts are with her husband Tom and family.



Prelude to Christmas

Thanks to all who supported our “Prelude to Christmas” concert on December 5th at SFDCI. Thanks especially to the wonderful Central Band of the Canadian Forces for performing for us for the 14th time! They put on a great show, which included the Command Pipe and Drums, a rendition of “The Night Before Christmas” narrated by Wayne Cavanagh, and a sing-a-long. A great selection of donated prizes surrounded the enormous lobby Christmas tree, and included colour photos by Simon Lunn, a wooden bird house crafted by Stella Kean and a Garden Market fruit basket.

We had our most successful sponsorship drive ever. Together local families, businesses and organizations contributed \$3700 to REAL’s work. This was very gratifying as we know that everyone is feeling the pinch in these tough economic times. The net profit for the evening was just over \$4500.



All in all a great evening, but unfortunately, not likely to be repeated. Due to changes in the Armed Forces, it is unlikely that the band will be able to perform for non-profits such as ours again. REAL people are brainstorming ways to replace this very successful fundraiser with something that this community can look forward to every year, and take advantage of established relationships with sponsors.

A very special thanks to Howard Allan Chartered Accountants of Perth, for contributing their Community Cares airtime to promoting the concert on Lake88 radio. We also appreciate that Wayne Cavanagh of Jack FM has done such a fabulous job of MCing for us year after year.

Kudos to the REAL people who planned this event. The committee included Peter Au, Cathryn Davidson, Don Harvey, Delores Grant, Ken Graham, Barb Hicks, John and Mary Joynt, Bonita Lucas and Donna McKenna. Rounding out the team that night were Daisy Au, Sue Brandum, Carolyn Fraser, David Grant, Brenda King and Karen Schecter, along with SFDCI students Austin Moore and MacKenzie Mitchell.

Supporting REAL’s Future

As a non-profit, volunteer-run organization, a significant part of REAL’s revenue comes as contributions from our community. We gratefully accept donations of any size and can issue charitable tax receipts.

We want our environmental progress to continue for years to come. If you would like to ensure that the work of your local environmental organization, REAL, can continue to benefit future generations, a bequest is one option.



A bequest is a powerful statement of your beliefs that costs you nothing in your lifetime. A simple stipulation can be included in your will directing a portion of your estate to REAL. A few examples are included on our website www.REALaction.ca under the Donate tab. We would be happy to discuss options with you; please contact Karen Schecter at 283-4604 or Schecter@vianet.ca.

In REAL Life

Ryan's Well Foundation was the recipient of a \$150 donation collected at REAL's Christmas concert. Concert-goers were offered punch or clean water at intermission in exchange for a donation. The Kemptville-based Canadian charity is raising funds to provide safe, clean drinking water in developing countries.



Are you interested in growing your own food? REAL is keeping a list of persons or groups interested in taking a plot at the REAL Deal Community Garden on the REAL Deal site for the 2013 growing season. E-mail info@realaction.ca or phone Barb at (613) 283-9966.



Pitch In Smiths Falls will be taking place April 20 – May 5, 2013. If you'd like to participate in this community-wide litter cleanup, or even help the organizing team, please call Bonita at 613-283-1174. Jobs could be phoning potential participants, putting up posters, picking up supplies, packing supply buckets and the like.



Don't forget to look into the saveONenergy Home Assistance program, designed to help homeowners and tenants improve their energy efficiency. If you qualify, an auditor will visit your home and install various devices to reduce electricity use. Electrically heated homes may be eligible for weatherstripping and insulation as well. To apply, call GreenSaver at 1-855-591-0877. If you tell them REAL sent you, REAL will receive a small promotional fee. More information is on their website: <https://saveonenergy.ca/consumer/home-assistance>.



REAL Update Distribution. We could use some help ensuring that printed copies of this newsletter get to more locations in our region besides Smiths Falls. If you go to any other communities periodically, could you take a few to a local gathering spot such as a coffee shop, waiting room, municipal office, or even a bulletin board? Think Merrickville, Balderson, Toledo, Perth, Kemptville, Carleton Place, Franktown etc. Please get in touch at info@realaction.ca or call Barb, 283-9966.

<http://www>

- The airport in Charlotte, NC is doing worm composting in a big way. They sell the recyclables mixed into the trash, use the compost to fertilize the grounds, and sell the excess "black gold" <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/charlotte-airport-opens-worm-composting-facility.html>
- Desmog Canada is an organization dedicated to clearing the air and offering a forum for discussion on the environment and science issues facing Canada. www.desmog.ca
- Satellite images of earth at night show a blaze of light from natural gas flaring in North Dakota. <http://www.treehugger.com/environmental-policy/what-wastes-enough-energy-power-25-million-cars-and-can-be-seen-space.html>
- A talk by the late Becky Tarbotton of the Rainforest Action Network on their work and "winning and losing". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAcAlxn-mCk>. Sixteen minutes but very inspiring.

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613-283-9500
info@REALaction.ca

We're on the Web
www.REALaction.ca

Environmental
Projects Manager
Sue Brandum
613-267-2257
sbrandum@cogeco.ca

**REAL Deal Store &
Environment Centre**

85 William St. W.,
Smiths Falls ON
K7A 5A5
613-283-7999

Store open Thurs, Fri, Sat
10am—4pm

Well Aware, Energy Audits,
RAIN or other programs
Phone: 613-283-9500

REAL people taking REAL action to protect our environment

Waste Materials Accepted at the REAL Deal

These are reused, recycled, or used to earn a bit of cash.

Plastic Outer Milk Bags. Are cut into strips and crocheted into mats and bags, usually for developing countries.

Batteries. Leave us your single use batteries (no car or truck batteries) for proper disposal.



Scrap Metal. Unusable metal items are collected and sold to Smiths Falls Iron and Metal. We will accept yours as well, e.g. cookware, mailboxes, BBQ's,



hubcaps, and small appliances (no washers, fridges, stoves etc.)

Ink and Toner Cartridges and Cell Phones. These earn



money for area schools and groups through Think Recycle.

Electrical Cords. We get paid for the copper wire inside. We collect it from the cords of discarded appliances, or from older style, energy inefficient Christmas lights.



PLEASE NOTE. These materials are accepted ONLY during store hours, Thurs - Sat, 10 - 4. We appreciate your cooperation!

**Make a
REAL
Difference**

Please return this form to:
REAL
Box 1061
Smiths Falls, ON
K7A 5A5

Or bring to
The REAL Deal

Make a Donation

I would like to make a donation of

\$ _____

A charitable receipt for income tax purposes will be issued. To donate by credit card, go to www.Canadahelps.org.

Volunteer

I want to help

Become a Member

I would like to become a member

- Individual membership \$15
- Family membership \$20
- Student membership \$5
- Corporate membership \$50

Contact Information

Name

Street/RR Address

Town, Province

Postal Code

Home Phone

Work Phone

Best time to reach me

Email address