

April 20, 2011

City facilities benefit from conservation upgrades to reduce greenhouse gases

Creative and effective energy conservation initiatives, such as one announced today at the Sunset Nursery in East Vancouver by the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Park Board and energy management company Ameresco, are significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from City facilities.

“Reducing our City’s greenhouse gas emissions by upgrading facilities like the Sunset Nursery is an important step to us becoming the world’s greenest city by 2020,” said Mayor Gregor Robertson. “Through innovative partnerships with businesses like Ameresco, we can reduce our carbon footprint and show how Vancouver can be a leader in energy efficiency.”

Vancouver Park Board’s Sunset Nursery, one of 36 City facilities receiving \$16.2 million in conservation upgrades, will experience one of the most significant GHG reductions as a result of the change.

The Sunset Nursery project saves energy by capturing waste heat from the adjacent Sunset Rink, where the refrigeration plant used to release the heat removed from the ice into the atmosphere. New heat pumps in 12 nursery greenhouses now transfer this previously lost heat from the rink to heat the greenhouses.

This measure, along with the replacement of two boilers with high efficiency condensing units, will reduce nursery emissions by 52 per cent, or 268 tonnes a year; the equivalent of removing 51 cars from city streets. Greenhouse gas emissions were 18 per cent lower in 2010 than they were in 1990 despite a 44 per cent increase in total area for City facilities. Further reductions are expected throughout 2011. During the course of the project, 35 green jobs were created.

Vancouver Park Board Chair Aaron Jasper says the City and Board are both committed to reducing GHGs. “We approved a contract to upgrade and retrofit 30 Park Board facilities with the more energy-efficient technologies to help us reach our targets,” he said. “I’m pleased to say that through a very ambitious conservation program funded by the City and led by the Park Board, we’ve been able to make incredible energy savings in these Park Board facilities.”

The upgrades were funded with capital that was borrowed from internal funds to be paid back with interest over a 20-year period using guaranteed utility savings.

Ameresco, an energy management company, was hired to recommend energy-savings, design and measure the GHG reduction initiatives, as well as provide performance guarantees. The company will monitor the actual results of the project and remit any shortfall to the City if actual savings are less than the guarantee.

“Ameresco is pleased to have played a significant role in the City of Vancouver’s corporate climate action program,” said Mario Lusi, President of Ameresco Canada. “We congratulate the City on their comprehensive approach and the leadership demonstrated in substantially

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reducing their corporate emissions as one stepping stone to eventually becoming the Greenest City in the World. Our local team has enjoyed working with the City's staff through all phases of this project and the growth of our Vancouver office since the project began is just one example of Vancouver's expanding green economy."

In Vancouver, GHGs have been reduced to 1990 levels and the City is on track to meeting the Kyoto target of six per cent below 1990 levels by 2012. Vancouver has the lowest per capita GHG emissions of any major city in North America at 4.6 tonnes per person.

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