

Home / [Arts](#)

Life Lesson in Conservation

Mary Teresa Bitti, National Post

Published: Thursday, September 24, 2009

For JoAnna Roberto, it was a no-brainer. As the principal of Sheridan Park Public School in St. Catharines, Ont., she leads a staff that views climate change as one of the most important topics facing the world. Her school has won awards for its environmental consciousness and she is investigating energy-efficient electrical devices that could be incorporated into a renovation going on now.

So, when the Ministry of Education introduced changes to its Grade 5 science and technology curriculum to focus on conservation, they eagerly adopted the Generation Conservation program sponsored by local electricity supplier Horizon Utilities Corp.

"The utility was ahead of the curve in putting this package together," Ms. Roberto says.

Generation Conservation was developed three years ago as a pilot project, as the ministry was developing a new science curriculum for environmental stewardship. When Horizon got involved, it helped to add a layer of technological connections such as websites.

Ms. Roberto says Generation Conservation supported her school's science curriculum expectations and incorporated it with literacy and numeracy --a cross-curricular approach.

"That," she says, "drives home the fact that conservation touches everything."

Even better, the students could take what they learned at school and apply it at home by conducting home energy audits and assessing where they can improve conservation. Mr. Roberto says that parents are now commenting on energy consciousness in their households as a result of what the school is doing. The Grade 4/5 class became leaders in conservation.

"When we started the smart-metering initiative, a program that's being rolled out in our communities, they were able to take the activities they had done and spread the word through the building," she says. "The activities are real and they can apply them to their real life. It is truly about changing behaviour, about learning to be energy wise."

It's already happened at Sheridan Park Public School. From Earth Hour on March 28 to Earth Day on April 22, the school cut energy consumption by 20% with its environmental program, called Eco Hawk, and Generation Conservation.

Related Topics

[JoAnna Roberto](#)
[Klaas Walma](#)
[Sandy Manners](#)
[Energy Efficiency and Conservation](#)
[Environmental Issues and Protection](#)

powered by **Inform**

Story Tools

[Change font size](#)
[Print this story](#)
[E-Mail this story](#)

Share This Story

[Facebook](#)
[Digg](#)
[LinkedIn](#)
[More](#)

Story tools presented by

And that's the point. "There has been a real push around sustainability across the curriculum," says Klaas Walma, secondary school consultant, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. "Now, no matter what the students are working on-- science, technology, geography -- there are opportunities ... to look at the environment and sustainability."

[Sign In](#) | [Register today](#)

For example, the students might be doing energy audits at the school or home, doing waste audits and making recommendations to the school, to parents groups and to community about how to do a better job of conserving energy and diverting waste.

"We are looking for ways to include real-world, relevant issues to include in the curriculum," Mr. Walma says. "Students respond positively when given an opportunity to make a difference in their own homes and communities. When you tie learning that is relevant and important to their lives to an opportunity to act, it strengthens the learning."

< 1 2 >

[Get the National Post newspaper delivered to your home](#)

More From National Post

[Mazda takes aim at the future](#)

National Post - Wednesday, September 23, 2009

[Shedding new light](#)

National Post - Friday, September 18, 2009

[New school leads by example](#)

National Post - Friday, September 11, 2009

[Power for the people](#)

National Post - Friday, September 4, 2009

[Enviro Managers](#)

National Post - Friday, August 28, 2009

More From the Web

[Toyota boosts sales forecast](#)

CNN - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[Get new windows and save \\$1,500](#)

NBC 24 Fresno-Visalia (KSEE) - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[CORRECTED - CORRECTED- Toyota raises world '09/10 sales f'cast 3 pct -media](#)

Reuters - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[In Housing Slump, Thrifty Renters Rule](#)

AOL News - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[JoAnna Roberto News on Inform.com](#)

Inform Technologies - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[Toyota Raises World Sales Forecast: Report](#)

CNBC - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[August durable goods orders surprise by tumbling 2.4pc](#)

South China Morning Post - Friday, September 25, 2009

[Philippines, ADB launch nationwide campaign to switch to energy-efficient light bulbs](#)

Daily News, Halifax - Saturday, September 26, 2009

[Trusty Trustmarks, Going Blind for Your Lashes, and the Age of Stupid](#)

TreeHugger - Friday, September 25, 2009

[Program Helps Denver Home Owners Save Energy](#)

CBS4 Denver Video - Monday, September 21, 2009

EXPOS RESURGENCE
Why is the logo of the defunct Expos suddenly so popular?

NETWORKING 101
Facebook and your digital reputation: Think before you post

GREEN ENERGY
News on green efficiencies for your business, on our dedicated page

Services: [Privacy](#) | [Terms](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Advertise with us](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Copyright and permissions](#) | [Today's paper](#) | [Digital paper](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [News Feeds](#) | [Subscription services](#) | [Site map](#)

National Post: [Home](#) | [News](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Arts](#) | [Life](#) | [Sports](#) | [Homes](#) | [Cars](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Multimedia](#) | [Classifieds](#)

Financial Post: [Home](#) | [News & Sectors](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Trading Desk](#) | [Markets](#) | [Personal Finance](#) | [Small Business](#) | [MBA](#) | [Careers](#) | [Reports](#) | [FP Magazine](#)

National Post and Financial Post are [Part of the](#)

[Network](#) [Canada.com Newspapers](#)

© 2009 The National Post Company. All rights reserved. Unauthorized distribution, transmission or republication strictly prohibited.