

For immediate release

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Celebrating Saskatchewan Waste Reducers

The Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council (SWRC) and SaskPower hosted Saskatchewan's 15th Waste Minimization Awards ceremony on April 7th at the Park Town Hotel in Saskatoon.

"The awards recognize waste minimization leadership in Saskatchewan for 2010," said Bert Weichel, Chairperson of the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council. "The actions of the recipients clearly demonstrate how we, as individuals, groups or industry can have an impact that helps to reduce the amount of waste going into our landfills."

The **Individual** award recognizes those whose initiative and dedication have impacted waste reduction in their communities, workplaces or government. The 2010 recipient is **Gordon Bonokoski**. Gordon is a retired teacher from Lumsden and a long-time supporter of waste reduction and recycling. Gordon's fellow townspeople describe him as 'tenacious' and 'persistent'. He championed recycling before it was fashionable: In the mid-80s, he collected newspapers at the school and sent them to Regina for recycling. He pushed fellow town councilors to expand Lumsden's recycling programs, found a building to use as a recycling depot, and convinced them to buy a baler and other equipment. Today, Lumsden boasts a comprehensive recycling program that includes curbside collection. Gordon was instrumental in making it happen.

The **Youth/School** award acknowledges youth and/or schools who have demonstrated exemplary commitment and leadership by involving peers, schools, neighbours, or communities in waste reduction and conservation efforts. The recipient was **Dr. Fidji Gendron & the Dept. of Science** at the First Nations University of Canada. Dr. Gendron works with inner city youth to help them learn about native plants, growing vegetables and composting. She manages a vermicomposting bin in the FNUC for lunch scraps that also gets used in demonstrations for schools and other groups. Each year the Dept. of Science organizes the Health and Science camp for 30 youth. This camp integrates Indigenous and Western concepts of health and science and includes waste reduction practices like reusable water bottles and making solar ovens with recycled cardboard. The FNUC itself has recycling and office supply reuse programs, including collecting used paper for a local daycare to use for arts & crafts.

The **Non-Profit** award recognizes the significant contribution that non-profit and grass roots groups make in helping us all reduce waste. The 2010 recipient was the **Sherbrooke Community Centre**. Sherbrooke is an innovative long term care facility with 270 residents, 100 community day program participants and 500 staff. Sherbrooke has been recycling milk cartons, paper and cardboard for several years. In 2008, they started composting some of their food waste. Their volunteers built a 20-foot compost bin, and residents and staff work together to collect the coffee grounds and vegetable scraps from the food preparation areas and take them to the outdoor compost bin. The program diverts two tons of food waste annually, and they are making plans to build another compost bin.

The **2010 Corporate Leadership** Award recipient was **London Drugs (Saskatchewan) Limited**. London Drugs has been 'quietly green' for years -- practicing energy conservation, switching to bio-fuels and reducing waste. In 2010, they reduced their waste in Saskatchewan by 50% and their 74

stores across western Canada diverted more than 10 million pounds from landfill. London Drugs also educates employees and consumers about green options with its 'greendeal' website. They are the only major retailer in the country to offer a packaging takeback program, allowing consumers to leave their packaging at the customer service desk on their way out, or to bring it back with proof of purchase once they unpack the item at home. London Drugs also takes back all electronic items with a plug and ships them to Vancouver for recycling. They offer the only recycling solution for many products not covered by current provincial recycling programs. London Drugs definitely goes above and beyond.

In the category of **Municipality with a population of less than 1,000**, the 2010 Waste Minimization Award winner was the **Resort Village of Shields**. Shields started a composting project in 2001. Every fall, residents deliver leaves to the compost site. In spring, the leaves are made into windrows and residents add their grass clippings to the leaf windrows over the summer. Initially all of the turning and mixing of the materials was done by hand, but as the program became more popular, the village provided a tractor to do the work. Shields produces 35-40 cubic yards of compost every year. The finished product is used in landscaping projects and given away to residents. This is a remarkable accomplishment and source of community pride for a village of 170 people.

The award for **Municipality with population greater than 1000** was given to the **R. M. of Lakeland**. Lakeland includes four lakes with resort villages and a golf resort. Its summer population easily reaches 20,000, which can be a challenge for waste reduction programs. In 2008, the RM established an Environmental Advisory Committee to help with creating a waste management strategy. The RM arranged for 12 recycling bins for paper and cardboard to be placed throughout the municipality. They have collected more than 55 tonnes of paper and cardboard so far with no contamination issues, a significant accomplishment for communities with many non-permanent residents. The Advisory Committee also organized a "Nurture Nature" fair in 2010 that offered recycling and composting tips, as well as providing reusable bags for residents.

The **Partnerships** award recognizes projects or programs which demonstrate the benefits of co-operation. In 2010 the partnerships award recipients were the **Town of Ituna, Village of Hubbard, Village of Lestock and R. M. of Ituna Bon Accord**. These communities have established a paper recycling depot in Ituna that serves a population of 3,000 and recycles 77 tonnes of all types of paper each year. The depot is staffed by Larry Antonishyn and Peter Brelis, Recycling Technicians living with disabilities, who help people unload their vehicles, sort the paper into its various categories and bale it up ready to be shipped. Their helpfulness and pride in their work have enriched the community and are a key part of making the partnership work.

All of the winners demonstrate a strong commitment to waste minimization and have made our province a better place to live. SWRC and SaskPower congratulate them!

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