

# GREEN GUIDE EARTH HOUR



TYREL FEATHERSTONE THE GAZETTE

Montreal city hall flipped the switch at 8:30 last night, joining about 3,200 cities and towns across the globe marking Earth Hour yesterday.

## Obama sets up climate forum

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama yesterday stepped into the battle to combat global warming, unveiling an international forum of 17 major economies, including Canada, to speed up work toward a key UN accord.

The April 27-28 preparator talks of the the Major Economics Forum on Energy and Climate will be followed by a summit of the 17 leaders in Italy in July, aiming to help hammer out a new agreement to curb greenhouse gases to replace the Kyoto Protocol when it expires in 2012.

The forum "will facilitate candid dialogue among key developed and developing countries, help generate the political leadership necessary to achieve a successful outcome at the UN climate change negotiations," the White House said.

And Obama aims to "advance the exploration of concrete initiatives and joint ventures that increase the supply of clean energy while cutting greenhouse gas emissions," the White House said.

UN talks on delivering the historic deal are set to resume in Bonn today, with many hoping Obama's untested negotiators can breathe life into the troubled process.

"The real negotiations are beginning here in Bonn this weekend," said the UN's top climate official, Yvo de Boer.

Scientists have warned the global warming caused by burning fossil fuels on a massive scale could devastate the planet, hitting the poorest countries hardest with floods, droughts and disease.

But the United States, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, never ratified the Kyoto Treaty.

The administration of former president George W. Bush walked away from the treaty, maintaining that it would prove too costly for U.S. businesses to implement an agreement demanding that developing countries should do more.

## Landmarks go dark around the world

### More than just lights out, Montrealers brainstorm about environmental issues

CANWEST NEWS SERVICE/  
GAZETTE

The call went out around the world for people to turn off the lights for an hour as a show of their concern about global warming and from Sydney, Australia, to Shelburne, N.S., people responded.

The lights in the landmark Sydney Opera House and on the Harbour Bridge were dimmed to mark the event in the city where it all started in 2007 with 2 million people turning out the lights.

Since then, Earth Hour has exploded to include more than 3,200 cities and towns from 84 countries, including 67 national capitals. The event, sponsored by the World Wildlife Federation, drew 50

million people in 2008 and organizers were hoping to reach one billion worldwide this year.

In Canada, planned events ranged from stargazing in Ottawa to a coffee house at the Trinity United Church and the Loyalist Food Bank in Shelburne, N.S., where musicians were to play unplugged to raise money for the food bank.

In Montreal, the lights went out at city hall, Place Ville Marie and the cross atop Mount Royal.

On the official Earth Hour Canada Facebook site, WWF staffers Lenore and Chelsea wrote: "It's 8:45 and the lights are out at Montreal's Société des arts technologiques! The event is called Art in the Dark

and that is exactly what is taking place - dozens of artists creating in the dark, from digital imaging, to an eco-brainstorm, and dj's keeping the crowd rockin'."

Other Montrealers marked the day by doing something healthy.

The walking group The Urban Hikers joined walkers from the Running Room for a trek from Little Burgundy to Old Montreal and back. About 50 people took part.

"It's exciting that people are actually paying attention to this," Betty Myers, 65, said.

In Ottawa, blogger Kate Proudlock reported that all the lights were out on Parliament Hill - "aside from one little one atop the spire, lighting up the Canadian flag."

In Halifax, "our event is going fabulously well despite a power electrician glitch that gave us a pre-emptive lights out at the event," WWF blogger Stacey McCarthy wrote

from an event that featured dances and musical performances.

"We now have 300 people downtown in a festive mood, it's fantastic."

In Toronto, a few hundred people, many carrying candles, gathered at Riverdale Park overlooking downtown where all the office towers were dimmed to some extent, and some were almost completely dark.

"The city's not as dim as we'd hoped, but it felt like a party," said Charlene Sadler, who attended a lights-out potluck and then walked to the park.

Earth Hour organizers announced on their website that as the event headed away from Asia it appeared participation was "soaring into the hundreds of millions."

The Eiffel Tower in Paris and the Houses of Parliament in London turned off their lights for the global initiative,

along with the Great Pyramids in Egypt, the Acropolis in Athens, the Colosseum in Rome and the Empire State Building in New York.

**Tips for green living:** Starting tomorrow and running until Earth Day on April 22, we'll have a green tip every day in The Gazette - something you can do to help the environment.

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