



# LP Given Permission to Increase Emissions

By Larry Powell



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE SOROVICH

The Clean Environment Commission found no "significant risk to human or environmental health."

**EIGHTEEN MONTHS** after being allowed to temporarily shut down pollution control devices at its mill in the Swan Valley, Louisiana Pacific Canada Limited (LP) now has the green light to scrap them indefinitely.

Manitoba's Minister of Conservation Bill Blaikie has accepted a key recommendation from the Clean Environment Commission (CEC). It calls for the issuance of a new license, allowing LP to operate its plant without the use of regenerative thermal oxidizers (RTOs).

In a government news release, Mr. Blaikie states, "We accept the CEC's recommendation the plant be permanently granted an amended licence and Manitoba Conservation officials will be working to thoroughly review the recommendations as a part of the licensing process."

The release added that LP has also taken other steps "to reduce emissions and exhaust discharge" such as improving its smokestack to "reduce the impact of emissions."

## Some vindication for critics?

In its report, the CEC, in effect, concedes that the critics were right on at least one count — that the RTOs were cutting down on those pollutants, dramatically.

"The RTOs are estimated to reduce the emission of volatile organic compounds, (VOCs) into the atmosphere by between 90 and 95 percent. Removing the RTOs will increase VOC emissions, often by more than one order of magnitude, and require adjustments to the emission limits in the Environment Act license governing the plant."

VOCs are an entire category of toxic chemicals, numbering in the thousands. At least two of them, *formaldehyde* and *acrolein*, cause cancer.

One of LP's critics also pointed last year to a major US study that showed a link between formaldehyde and ALS, or "Lou Gehrig's" disease.

An expert in industrial pollutants, Charles Simon of the Florida-based company, Precision

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Analytical Laboratories Inc., was one of three hired by groups critical of LP. In his report issued last year, Dr. Simon warned of a *400-fold increase* in emissions if decommissioning were allowed.

## The CEC's justification

To quote from the report, "The Commission's concern is not, for the most part, with the magnitude of the increase, but the impact of the increase." It therefore finds that, "The increased emissions associated with a decision to operate the plant as proposed would not present a statistically significant risk to human or environmental health."

And even with the controls shut down, the many toxins escaping into the air at the plant, according to the Commission, are not exceeding any existing limits governing air quality in Manitoba.

Except, perhaps, for one.

"The proposed emission rates for the VOCs associated with OSB production will not — with one exception — lead to exceedances of applicable ambient air quality criteria. In the case of that one exception, *acrolein*, the predicted exceedances are rare (only two days a year) ... and

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## Executive Director's Letter

**EARLY FALL GREETINGS TO EVERYONE.** Looking back over the summer, several dramatic events stand out: massive floods in Pakistan, equally massive forest and peat fires in Russia, news of greater thinning of the Arctic ice.

Officially, almost nobody is pointing to global warming as a cause for all of this, but it's getting to look suspiciously like those predictions of extreme weather events by the world's top climate scientists. If we accept that reality, we really have to get serious about adaptation measures while continuing to do everything we can to break our global dependence on fossil fuels. Check out Climate Change Connection's new resource on adaptation at: [Climatechangeconnection.org/Solutions/Adaptation.htm](http://Climatechangeconnection.org/Solutions/Adaptation.htm)

What about closer to home? Was the summer of never-ending rain in southern Manitoba also part of this scenario? Maybe, though we are clearly in a wet cycle at the moment. A recent Statistics Canada study gives us pause, concluding that the freshwater resources of the southern Prairies declined by almost nine percent between 1971 and 2004, while demand increased.

And talk of Statistics Canada reminds me of some recent political decisions, including the demise of the long form census. While concern has centred around demographic and social matters, the long form also tells us about environmental and health-related issues, particularly behaviour patterns over time — information that we need if we really want to change future behaviour.

I'm worried too, about the continuing reduction in emphasis on environmental assessment of new developments. Funding cuts to environmental organizations (along with our cousins in the development community) at both federal and provincial levels is also a major issue for us.

The Canadian Environmental Network (our national umbrella organization) suffered a major funding reduction this year from the federal government, and Manitoba groups were dismayed when the local Sustainable Development Innovations Fund (Open Category) was frozen for the year. It's an important funding source, especially for smaller groups who do not have charitable status. Minister of Conservation Bill Blaikie tells me that he is hopeful that the fund will be restored next year. In the meantime, we are grateful for the continuing financial support that his department provides to the Eco-Network.

Is it all doom and gloom? I think we'd be Pollyannas if we denied the seriousness of the global situation. It's a critical time to act, and everyone needs to know that these are not "just environmental" issues — they touch on every aspect of our lives and demand responses from every sector. But as my son-in-law, Nick, asked me recently: isn't there cause for hope? He and my son (committed car-free locavores) live in Montreal, and they see a huge movement to local and sustainably produced food and amazing growth in cycling, not to mention the interest more and more people are showing about green issues, as indications that the tide is turning.

I have to agree with him, and I feel challenged by his next question to me, "what is the next step" for all these concerned people to take? I think involvement is the answer. Getting active with groups working for change, and understanding the policies and decisions needed to support change, is the next step.

Looking at the network of groups across the country, I appreciate the critical role they play as avenues for citizen involvement, for interpretation of sometimes confusing issues, and for pressure to change. I hope that in spite of the difficult times we all face, we can continue to provide those services for Canadians.

Manitoba Eco-Network has a busy year ahead with a strong focus on helping to strengthen the capacity of our member groups, starting in October with the Member Group Forum and the Greenspace Youth Forum.

Your resolution for the coming year? Get involved! Contact us to learn how to become an active part of the environmental movement in Manitoba.

Anne Lindsey  
*Executive Director, Manitoba Eco-Network*



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## OCTOBER

**October is International Walk To School Month.** A chance to celebrate our environment and to spend valuable time with one another. For more info: [www.greenactioncentre.ca](http://www.greenactioncentre.ca).

**9-16 Organic Week in Canada.** Join in celebrating Canada's vibrant alternative food system. Find out more at: [www.organicweek.ca](http://www.organicweek.ca)

**10 10/10/10.** On 10/10/10, thousands of communities all over the world will join together to celebrate climate solutions; we'll be putting up solar panels, installing wind turbines, digging community gardens, and more. For more info: [www.350.org](http://www.350.org).

**13 Fresh movie.** This film on food presents a vision of the possible by profiling heroes. There will also a panel discussion with local farmers and prize packages. Starts at 7:00 p.m., tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. For more info: [www.organicweek.ca](http://www.organicweek.ca).

**15 2010 Golden Carrot Awards.** Food Matters Manitoba has received more than 30 nominations for this year's Golden Carrot Awards! Join them at the Manitoba Legislative, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., to celebrate these food champions. For more info: [www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca](http://www.foodmattersmanitoba.ca) or 943-0822.

**15 Force of Nature: The David Suzuki movie.** A documentary about David Suzuki's life, his personal journey and hopes for the future. Playing at Grant Park Cinema. For more info: [www.legacy.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.legacy.davidsuzuki.org).

**15, 16, 22, 23 Master Composter Course (Brandon).** The Green Action Centre's Master Composter Training and Volunteer Program will run over four days and is free. For more info: Kate at 1-866-394-8880 or [kate@greenactioncentre.ca](mailto:kate@greenactioncentre.ca).

**18-24 Waste Reduction Week.** Waste Reduction Week encourages Manitobans to reduce waste and to take up other earth-friendly practices. Schools, communities and businesses will find tips and suggestions at [www.greenactioncentre.ca](http://www.greenactioncentre.ca).

**22 Manitoba Eco-Network Mingler.** Meet the Member Groups of Manitoba Eco-Network at this free and fun mingler. More details TBA at [www.mbeconetwork.org](http://www.mbeconetwork.org).

**25 Thinking BIG about Ecosystems, Evolution and Life.** A special Nature Manitoba event presented by John and Mary Theberge (authors of *The Ptarmigan's Dilemma*). 7:30 p.m. at the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain. Admission: \$5. For more info: 943-9029 or [www.manitobanature.ca](http://www.manitobanature.ca).

**27 Exploring Your Small Farm Dream Course (Brandon).** Participants will learn what it takes to start and manage a farm business, and decide whether it is something they would really like to pursue. The course runs for six Wednesdays from 6:30-9:30 p.m.. Cost: \$300 + GST. For more info: [www.organicfoodcouncil.org](http://www.organicfoodcouncil.org).

## NOVEMBER

**5 Global Justice Film Festival.** Watch a variety of films that support a better vision for our world and connect with the people who care. For more info: [www.globaljusticefilmfestival.ca](http://www.globaljusticefilmfestival.ca).

**6 Get Your Green On.** The Green Action Centre's launch event, featuring Keri Latimer from Nathan, Le Beato and DJ Cyclist. Tickets are \$10, 8p.m. at The Academy, 437 Stradbrook Ave. For more info: [www.greenactioncentre.ca](http://www.greenactioncentre.ca).

**15 Challenges For the Conservation of Manitoba Bats.** Dr. Willis will talk about these fascinating mammals and related research/conservation issues. 7:30 p.m. at Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre. Cost: \$2 for NM members, \$3 for non-members. For more info: call 943-9029 or [www.manitobanature.ca](http://www.manitobanature.ca).

**24-28 Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival.** The WAFF is the third-largest festival in North America dedicated to indigenous cinema, with over 60 films being screened this year. For more info: 774-1375 or [www.aboriginalfilmfest.org](http://www.aboriginalfilmfest.org).

Please email your event notices to [info@mbeconetwork.org](mailto:info@mbeconetwork.org).

## OF SPECIAL NOTE

*The Eco-Network appreciates the many contributions to our efforts, and would like to recognize some very special donations...*

**Manitoba Eco-Network acknowledges with gratitude our many supporters and donors.** Over the summer, we've received some new funds to support our projects. The RBC Foundation (Bluewater Project) approved our application for a regional grant for \$100,000 over two years to assist in the work of the Water Caucus project. Besides helping to support the ongoing work of this project, it will also allow us to expand our Protecting Our Water Conservation and Stewardship project to two Manitoba communities outside of Winnipeg. The Thomas Sill Foundation has contributed \$10,000 to the Eco-Network also to support our Water Caucus work. This grant enabled us to meet our revenue requirements for that project for the current year.

**The Organic Lawn Care (OLC) Education Project** was able to expand somewhat this year, thanks to the Y Eco-Intern position in the person of Amanda Kinden, and some additional funding from Mountain Equipment Coop and Lee Valley tools. Creation of our Mow Better workshop, a tool lending library, and a print handbook of OLC practices are amongst the initiatives that these grants help to support. We'd also like to thank the Youth in Philanthropy groups at Balmoral Hall and Churchill High School. The Churchill group contributed \$1,000 to the expansion and improvement of our library from their Winnipeg Foundation allocation. Balmoral Hall's \$100 goes to general operating revenues.





## Announcing the Protecting Our Earth Awards; Nominations Now Open

**MANITOBA ECO-NETWORK'S** annual environmental awards have a new name and a new look. We are proud to introduce the Protecting Our Earth Awards, or "Earthies," and will be unveiling the new artwork and the first award winners at the Reel Green Film Festival in February 2011.

Nominations are now open, and we invite all Manitobans to consider submitting the names of environmental groups and individuals who have made significant contributions to the protection and awareness of Manitoba's environment. The nomination form may be found on our website at [www.mbeconetwork.org](http://www.mbeconetwork.org) (Note: all nominations must be made using this form. If you don't have internet access, please call us and we'll send you a form.) You can also view all the past winners of the award on the website.

This is a great opportunity to recognize the crucial work done by our peers and colleagues. The nomination period will close on December 15, 2010, and a committee of our Board of Directors will make the selections. 🌱

## Manitoba Eco-Network Welcomes New Member Groups

**DURING THE SUMMER OF 2010**, six groups joined as members of the Manitoba Eco-Network, bringing the number of members close to 60:

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Manitoba  
Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources  
Food Matters Manitoba  
Lake Winnipeg Foundation  
Prairie Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre  
West Broadway Development Corporation

Three of the groups took the opportunity to submit introductions of the work they do.

**FOOD MATTERS MANITOBA (FMM)** is a registered charity that engages Manitobans towards healthy, sustainable, and fair food for all through public education, building partnerships and networks, and cultivating community food skills. FMM coordinated over 30 community food projects in 2009. Our major events include the Golden Carrot Awards to recognize local food champions, the Northern Harvest Forum/ Root Camp to exchange northern food skills and knowledge, and the Growing Local Conference to address local agricultural issues. FMM coordinates the Manitoba Food Security Network, and the Winnipeg Food Policy Working Group, which works towards the development of a Winnipeg Food Policy Council.

—Ashlee Espenell

**PRAIRIE WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTRE INC. (PWRC)** is a non-profit organization whose main goal is to treat injured and orphaned wildlife and to successfully release them back into their natural habitat. Founded in 2007 by Manitoba's first Certified Wildlife Rehabilitator (CWR), PWRC practices effective, state of the art rehabilitation techniques including the use of both conventional and homeopathic medications, naturalized enclosures, environmental enrichment techniques, and the tracking of released raptors.

PWRC also works proactively to protect wildlife resources by promoting healthy human-wildlife relationships, teaching people how to accurately recognize injured and orphaned wildlife, and what to do if you find wildlife in distress. Please help us help wildlife – call 510-1855 if you find wildlife in distress and spread the word!

—Jen Syrowitz

**THE MANITOBA OFFICE OF THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES (CCPA-MB)** is pleased to be counted among the members of Manitoba Eco-Network.

The CCPA provides alternative analyses to the status quo and corporate-dominated thinking. Our research has proved to be a catalyst for the people on the ground to fight for change in environmental and social issues. We also help decision makers to enact policy decisions that are more in line with the real needs of Manitobans.

We invite the members and friends of Manitoba Eco-Network to visit our website at [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca) to get familiar with the work we do.

—Jill Hudspith

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<< continued from page 1

## Louisiana Pacific cont'd...

are two orders of magnitude below the lowest concentrations at which negative health impacts have been observed in humans.”

As a result, it adds, “The CEC accepts the health-risk analysis conclusion that *acrolein* emissions would not result in an appreciable health risk to the surrounding population.”

At the same time, the Commission is also recommending that the proposed design of the plant “be reviewed to determine whether these “exceedances could be prevented or minimized.”

### Lax air monitoring?

Without stating so directly, the CEC also recognized that critics were justified in pointing out that LP placed its air monitoring stations in inadequate locations (upwind of the mill), making it difficult or impossible to accurately measure the emissions.

In an apparent attempt to now correct this shortcoming, the CEC recommends LP be required to set up a monitoring system “that is capable of providing the data required to validate the predicted ground-level concentrations” of emissions. “This may require a minimum of three additional locations close to the area of predicted high ground-level concentrations.”

### Background

The government’s decision in January of 2009 to grant a temporarily RTO closure angered some citizens and environmentalists in the province. They argued that that decision meant much higher levels of toxic pollutants were escaping from the plant than at any time since it opened in the mid ‘90s with the controls in place.

In the midst of the uproar, the Minister of Conservation at the time, Stan Struthers, ordered the CEC, an arms-length advisory agency, to investigate the merits of LP’s application to decommission the RTOs.

If it was not allowed to do so, LP threatened to shut down its entire plant, throwing hundreds of people out of work. It maintained that the financial burden of keeping the aging controls in place (\$3 million per year to operate, \$10 million to replace) would leave it no choice.

The full Clean Environment Commission report is available at [Cecmanitoba.ca](http://Cecmanitoba.ca). 🌱

*Larry Powell blogs at [Pathlessstravelled.com](http://Pathlessstravelled.com), where he originally published a longer version of the above article on September 14, 2010.*

# Winnipeg Votes 2010

## A viewpoint on civic issues to consider

By Joel Trenaman

**COUNCIL AND MAYORAL ELECTIONS** are in a few short weeks, and citizens have their most decisive opportunity to have a say in the process of municipal government. The vote for the job of chief executive/administrator/visionary, or simply put, mayor, is at the forefront of many peoples’ minds. Yet, fewer incumbencies, and what appears to be more active organizing against sitting councillors, could lead to more tightly contested City Council campaigns than we are used to seeing.

Honestly, in the age of poll-influenced voting patterns and glossy political culture, the cynical political scientist in me could argue on practical terms that it actually is more important or relevant to spend more time and energy on whom to vote for and what to vote on this time — because (polls say) there appears to be closer contests (at least as of late September).

Take that as you will, but in any case, it’s fair to say that it’s a good idea to be aware of civic issues you may not have thought of or heard enough about, before election day.

This past May, the City of Winnipeg released a draft of its new long-term planning blueprint, *OurWinnipeg*. Created at a cost of \$3 million to replace *Plan Winnipeg*, which was supposed to cover the period until 2020, the new document lays out ideas for roads, rapid transit, new suburban and infill development and density, parking, crime and other key issues until 2035. On July 21, following a series of public meetings, Council voted to refer their recommendations and the document to the provincial government for consideration.

It is almost certain that the provincial government will not come back to Council with their opinions until following the election, placing an extra level of importance on the election outcomes for interested Winnipeggers; the politicians left standing in November will get to place or alter their stamp on the city, or at least its plan, for decades to come.

The *OurWinnipeg* documents, including four auxiliary modules, “Complete Communities,” “Sustainable Transportation,” Sustainable Water & Waste” and “A Sustainable Winnipeg,” can be found at: [www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/OurWinnipeg/default.stm](http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/OurWinnipeg/default.stm).

## Issues and key questions:

### Active transportation

In 2010, Winnipeg introduced a new map of an Active Transportation Network “hike it, bike it, like it,” based on new or improved Infrastructure Stimulus Program-funded routes. The stimulus plan involved \$20 million in combined funds from all three levels of government. What have you thought of the past or ongoing attempts to create cycling pathways and alter streets for commuting?

### City planning

Should the “open” lands within the perimeter all be designated for subdivision development? Should more emphasis be placed on territorial expansion, or denser infill development? As the “infrastructure deficit” skyrockets, what should the city’s highest-priority projects be?

### Transit

How can existing Winnipeg Transit service be improved or even maintained? Should LRT OR BRT lines be the focus, how can either be funded, and should they crisscross the city in the particular way shown in the plan?

### Finances

Tax freezes and/or cuts have to be paid for just the same as new infrastructure, rapid transit or roads. What can the city do fiscally, i.e. how can we pay for whatever you believe the city’s priorities should be?

### Wastewater

There is a thirty-year contract with Veolia Canada to oversee two major sewage-treatment plant upgrades worth over \$600 million. The idea is that paying Veolia management fees for their expertise will save money — a reported 10 to 20 percent of the operating costs. How important is it that the contract be made public? Is this a good blueprint or precedent on which to make future decisions of this nature?

### Other

- Chemicals, pesticides, war on mosquitoes
- Removal of phosphorous and/or nitrogen in wastewater
- Garbage, waste, recycling 🌱



# Scenes of Ciclovía 2010

By Joel Trenaman



**WINNIPEG'S SECOND CICLOVIA** festival took place on Sunday, September 12.

Ciclovía has its roots in Bogota, Colombia, named for the practice that sees main streets regularly closed to traffic to facilitate active transportation. Last year Winnipeg was the first Canadian city to turn the idea into a street party.

The free festival closed the north side of Broadway from Osborne to Main Street, as well as parts of nearby feeder routes, creating a celebratory setting of car-free streets. Events included a farmers' market, bicycle polo, street vendors, outdoor fitness classes, live music, and other activities and displays. Hosted by the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ, the event drew an estimated 10,000 people. 🌱

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOEL TRENAMAN UNLESS NOTED.





Counter-clockwise from top left:

Bike spotted on Broadway: there were few better symbols of what Ciclovía is all about.

Thousands of cyclists simply took the time to stroll along Broadway to be a part of the atmosphere.

Attendee Scott Ewers takes a Ciclovía directive literally.

Winnipeg Electric Company bus 111 was on display near Main Street. It operated until 1955.

Winnipeg's energetic Blue Sky Addicts were one of many Sunday afternoon bands.

Bike polo was fascinating to watch. The Winnipeg Urban Polo Association holds regular games.

Beth McKechnie and Shoni Litinsky represented Green Action Centre (formerly Resource Conservation Manitoba). The new name is designed to more clearly inform Manitobans about the programs and activities in which they engage.

Jackie Avent of the Green Action Centre was the lucky winner of the Ciclovía bike.

Knor's Garden Korner from Teulon was one of the many market gardeners at Ciclovía.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHONI LITINSKY







# U of W Sustainability Initiative in Practice

Lowered water consumption, locally sourced food and GHG reduction all part of strategic process

By Alana Lajoie-O'Malley, Director, Campus Sustainability Office

**AS STUDENTS HEADED BACK** to classes at the University of Winnipeg this year, they may not have noticed changes to the university's infrastructure and operations; however, they are learning on a campus that is continually taking steps to put into practice the principles and practices they are learning in the classroom.

The university is supporting a multi-stakeholder, collaborative process aimed at making it more socially and environmentally responsible in its operations, its governance, and its academic life.

In 2005, UWinnipeg launched its Sustainability Initiative. At the core of the initiative are the university's multi-stakeholder Campus Sustainability Council and the developing Sustainability Management System (consisting of sustainability policies, along with tracking, annual reporting, and planning mechanisms) that the council supports and oversees.

The existence of the council, comprised of students, faculty, and staff, highlights the fact that this initiative is a collaborative effort between all members of the campus community.

Each year, the university takes steps to meet the goals set in its sustainability policies. For example, over the next two months, the university is installing a hybrid heating system — two auxiliary electric boilers beside existing natural gas-fired boilers, along with a control system that switches between natural gas and electric-

ity. This means electricity can be used to replace natural gas for heating purposes at strategic times throughout the day. The university anticipates that the hybrid system will significantly reduce its overall greenhouse gas (GHG) output.

Recognizing that fuel switching is only part of a responsible GHG reduction plan, the university is also in the process of completing a sustainability audit of its core buildings to identify energy and GHG reduction opportunities.

The University of Winnipeg also launched a major water retrofit project in the spring — all bathrooms on campus are being outfitted with low-flow toilets and sinks. Savings analysis of washrooms already retrofitted suggest that the university could reduce water consumption by as much as 4,536,634 litres of potable water per year.

"These latest sustainability initiatives on campus are extremely significant because in 2005 we pledged to become a Kyoto-compliant university," said Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President and Vice-Chancellor. "We know that our students are environmentally aware and want us to reduce our carbon footprint in tangible ways. Given our commitment to absolute reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, we are aware that each building we add to our campus requires us to be even more aggressive with our carbon reduction strategies. We remain committed and on track to meeting our 2012 target and are also beginning to look ahead to further targets beyond 2012." 🌱



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WINNIPEG

Over the past several years, the university:

- Was the first university in Canada to ban water for sale, eliminating thousands of plastic water bottles which had been sold on campus annually.
- Established compost collection program for pre- and post-consumer organics.
- Introduced a locally sourced food service on campus called Diversity Foods.
- Switched to Eco-Logo certified detergents and cleaning products.
- Established double-sided printing as default on all copiers and printers on campus.
- In partnership with the Manitoba government, is poised to test how well low-speed electric vehicles work in winter. The vehicles will shuttle from building to building on campus.

To find out more about the UW Sustainability Initiative or to download a copy of its annual report: <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/sus-index>.



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WILDLIFE**



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# U of M Campus Going Green

Sustainability Office spearheading a range of accomplishments

By Maire McDermott, Sustainability Coordinator, University of Manitoba

**SUSTAINABILITY** is an important principle at the University of Manitoba. Since the early 1990s, we've made huge strides to improve our energy efficiency, reduce our waste and increase our recycling, conserve water and green our buildings. We're continuing to improve our sustainability performance through a comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan in development by the University of Manitoba Sustainability Committee. But, for now, we'd like to take a moment to share with you a few of our accomplishments.

## Energy and Water Efficiency

- The University of Manitoba recovers waste energy for heating including 100 percent of the needs of Aboriginal House.
- We are using less than 50 percent of the water compared to 12 years ago despite considerable growth.
- The University's Energy Advocate continuously pursues energy and water conservation opportunities.
- The power to our parking lot outlets is cycled according to weather for maximum efficiency.

## Green Building

- The University of Manitoba's Aboriginal House is a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certified building.
- LEED Silver is the minimum target certification for all new buildings.
- The U of M emphasizes using durable materials to minimize waste, maintenance and replacement costs.

## Green Procurement

- The University of Manitoba Procurement Services has integrated the principles of sustainability into its Purchasing Policy and Procedures
- The department also works with suppliers to offer U of M customers cost-effective, green alternatives.

## Green Cleaning

- The University of Manitoba uses third party certified (Green Seal and/or Eco-Logo) paper and cleaning products.
- Our cleaning chemical dilution control



Aboriginal House at the U of M, one of the newest campus buildings, was built to LEED Gold standard.

- centres minimize waste by eliminating containers and also minimizes excess chemical use.
- Caretaking Services of the U of M has reduced the use of 200 chemicals down to only five.

## Waste Prevention and Recycling

- The University is adopting online reporting and campus directory as well as electronic pay stubs.
- Our campuses have comprehensive paper and beverage container recycling programs.
- Our waste prevention initiative includes a ReShop for supplies and gently used office furnishings.

- The Fort Garry campus grass-cycles, composts leaves and chips all wood debris for use on campus grounds.
- The University of Manitoba recycles its fluorescent lamps, batteries, cell phones and electronic waste.
- We encourage and facilitate zero-waste event planning.

## Engaging the Campus

- We communicate our accomplishments and encourage positive environmental actions through a variety of channels, including various social networking sites such as well as through other means like mailing lists, mail-outs, bulletins and newsletters.

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# Thinking BIG About Ecosystems, Evolution and Life

A Nature Manitoba special event

By Roger Turenne, Nature Manitoba

THE “MYSTERY OF MYSTERIES” is how life has managed to persist, despite repeated global catastrophes, for almost four billion years on such a restless and changeable planet, resulting — today — in the richest diversity of all. The secrets of success lie in organization. In this illustrated talk, John and Mary Theberge take us on a journey of discovery to the wild places where they have studied wildlife.

Using the rapidly expanding knowledge about the natural world, they extract meaning from the wood duck’s plumage, the ways Labrador caribou illustrate the principles of population regulation, and the significance of the ptarmigan’s dilemma — which inspired the title of their newest book. Summing up, they reflect on the significance of natural processes in an increasingly human-dominated world.

Nature Manitoba is pleased to host John and Mary Theberge as part of their tour through Canada to promote their book *The Ptarmigan’s Dilemma: An Exploration Into How Life Organizes and Supports Itself*. The event will

take place Monday, October 25 at 7:30 p.m. at Le Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain, Salle Pauline Boutal on the main floor.

**McClelland & Stewart publisher’s information, from [Mcclelland.com](http://Mcclelland.com):**

## About the book

“Drawing on breakthrough research in evolution, genetics, and on their extensive work in the field and lab, wildlife biologists John and Mary Theberge explain for non-scientists the real facts of life.

Birds that suddenly grow gall bladders, when their species has none. Moose with antlers so big they encumber their movement through the forest. Butterflies that risk extinction by overwintering en masse. These are just a few stories the Theberges tell in their examination of what the mechanisms of evolution are and how they

work. With examples from the very latest discoveries in genetics and ones they have made in their own field work, *The Ptarmigan’s Dilemma* is a ground-breaking explanation of evolution for non-scientists.

By marrying the separate sciences of ecology and genetics, the Theberges paint a picture far richer than either discipline can alone of how, for almost 4 billion years, life on Earth has evolved into the rich diversity that’s under threat today. Along the way, they explain just what “the survival of the fittest” really means, how dramatic evolutionary changes can take place in just one generation, and how our too-little knowledge of or interest in how life on Earth organizes and supports itself is rapidly making us a danger to ourselves.”

## About the authors

“John Theberge and Mary Theberge have spent more than thirty years conducting field research in the Yukon, Labrador, and British Columbia, and especially in Algonquin Park, Ontario. They have collaborated on many scientific and popular articles and were jointly awarded the 1994 Equinox Citation for Environmental Achievement.

John B. Theberge was until his recent retirement a professor of ecology and resource management in the faculty of environment studies at the University of Waterloo, where he taught since 1970. Mary Theberge is a wildlife illustrator and wolf researcher and has presented many popular programs about their discoveries. They are the authors of several books, including *Kluane: Pinnacle of the Yukon*, *Wolf Country*, and *Legacy: A Natural History of Ontario*.”

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- ★ North America’s 3rd largest Aboriginal Film Festival

\*Venues include the University of Winnipeg and Cinematheque in the Arts Space Building  
[www.aboriginalfilmfest.org](http://www.aboriginalfilmfest.org)

Photo from Taika Waititi’s “BOY”

**Mark your calendars for November 24th-28th in Downtown Winnipeg!**



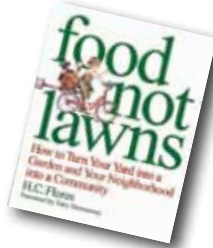
## New In the Library

All of the materials in the Alice Chambers Memorial Library may be loaned out free of charge. There is no-charge postal delivery outside Winnipeg. Please contact Erica Young, Resource Assistant, at 947-6511 for more information. [www.mbeconetwork.org/library.php](http://www.mbeconetwork.org/library.php)

### New Books:

**Food Not Lawns: How to Turn Your Yard into a Garden and Your Neighbourhood into a Community**

By H.C. Flores  
Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2006



Drawing on permaculture and ecological design, the first half of Food Not Lawns explores how to create “ecological paradise gardens”, even for those without lawns of their own. The author then shows how applying these principles beyond the garden can help us make sustainable lifestyle choices and transform our human community into a healthy, thriving “ecosystem.” This practical handbook contains everything from instructions for building a home grey water system to tips for consensus decision-making.

**Wildwood: A Journey Through Trees**

By Roger Deakin  
Free Press, 2009

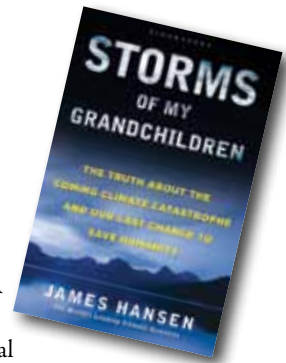


Wildwood is a beautiful journey through the forests of Britain and a few others around the world. The author shares his deep appreciation for wood — as a construction material, as canvas and artwork, in myth and legend, in economics and landscapes. This work of natural history will make you want to become better acquainted with the woods in your part of the world.

## Featured Book Review

### Storms Of My Grandchildren: The Truth About The Coming Climate Catastrophe And Our Last Chance To Save Humanity

Author: James Hansen  
Bloomsbury, 2009



**READING** *Storms of My Grandchildren* by James Hansen, head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, is rather a lot like learning about climate change from your own wise and humorous grandfather. Hansen’s conversational tone animates the history, science and politics of climate change in the United States.

In addition to a wealth of informative climate science (including a few gloomy predictions for our future if we continue to burn fossil fuels at current rates), Hansen provides concrete recommendations for change in this personal plea inspired by his worries for the future of his grandchildren and decades of being ignored by U.S. policy-makers. While the original spark for the book was personal, most of Hansen’s recommendations are aimed at national policy-makers, not individuals.

I found his assessment of climate change politics and the media to be his most compelling argument. Hansen complains that scientists who argue like lawyers defending a position (the climate change deniers, skeptics, or Contrarians), and not those searching for scientific truths, have greater sway with media, cultural and government officials because they are winning rhetoricians. Therefore, “balance” in the media, when it comes to climate change, does more harm than good. Hansen’s discussion of this pressing topic clarifies why climate change continues to be perceived as such a cloudy issue.

I would recommend this book to any reader with a strong appetite for climate science and U.S. political history. Hansen’s tongue-in-cheek tone makes this book an enjoyable read for those who are already committed to learning about climate change.

— Reviewed by Shawna Plischke Culleton, Public Education and Outreach Coordinator, Climate Change Connection.

## Periodical Profile

*Periodical Profile features magazines and newsletters of interest to Eco-Journal readers. The Alice Chambers Memorial Library has a range of periodicals available for loan.*

### Geez

([Geezmagazine.org](http://Geezmagazine.org))



**FOUNDED IN 2005**, Geez is a Winnipeg-based non-profit with a primary audience of a few thousand readers in pockets of Canada and the United States. However, the magazine boasts subscribers in every state and province, as well as 15 other countries. More than one of its staff are U.S.-based, including first-rate designer Darryl Brown. Geez has an Adbusters-style bent to it, owing in part to the fact that editor Aiden Enns used to be the managing editor of the Vancouver-produced collage of anti-consumerist culture and activism.

At the 2009 UTNE Independent Press Awards, Geez won the award for “Best Spiritual Coverage,” and is at its heart, a spiritual, or Christian, magazine. However, the mandate is to challenge established orthodoxies, fundamentalists and religious sell-outs, within that context. The magazine’s own not-entirely-tongue-in-cheek self-labelling is apt: “A bustling spot for the over-churched, out-churched, un-churched and maybe even the un-churchable. A location just beyond boring bitterness. A place for wannabe contemplatives, front-line world-changers and restless cranks.”

Each issue features a theme, around which about half of the content is based. The past three thematic outlets have been The Body, Work, and Jesus. Uniquely plotted-out sections make up the remainder of each 80-recycled-page quarterly, including most notably Experiments, Culturocities and Civil Disobedience.

Geez 19 (the current Fall 2010 edition) is called “The Wild Issue” and takes on human relationships with nature. It features the tagline, “an exploration of the untameable,” and includes content on eco-philosophy, the idea of God in nature, and straight-up environmentalist ranting and reporting.

Oh, and did I mention that Geez is advertising-free?

— Joel Trenaman

# The Fresh Air of Winnipeg

## A primer on the Air Quality Health Index

By Jhonnathan Menjivar

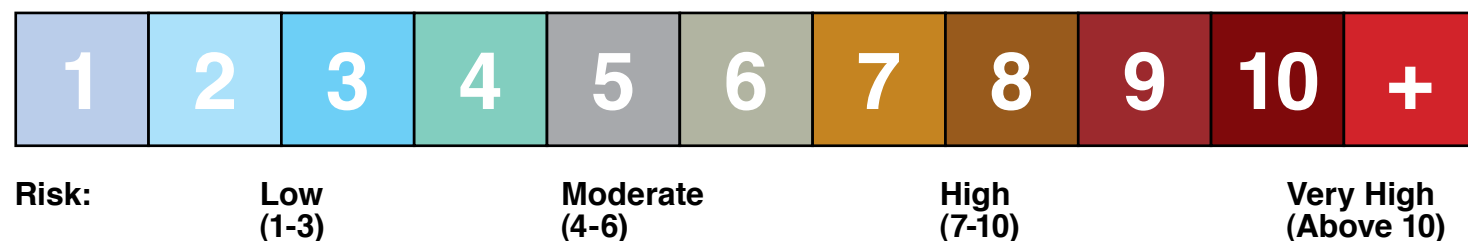


Figure 1: The AQHI scale

**IN OUR ATMOSPHERE** there is pollution — sometimes small amounts and other times large amounts. This pollution is emitted from many different sources, such as cars, aircrafts, factories, power plants, and even from natural sources such as volcanoes. However, each source of pollution emits different types of pollutants. Pollutants can be particulate matter, methane, nitrogen dioxide, or ozone, just to name a few. Therefore, air quality describes the measurement of pollutants in the air, emitted from different sources.

To describe how healthy and how safe this air may be, Environment Canada and Health Canada came up with the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI). This is a public health tool that helps you understand how the air quality around you affects your health. This index is designed to help you make decisions to better protect your health during increased levels of air pollution.

The AQHI is a scale that is numbered from 1 to 10+, as shown in figure 1. A higher number indicates poorer air quality and thus a greater health risk, while a lower number indicates better air quality and thus a lower health risk. The number is sometimes referred to as the AQHI number. Based on the AQHI number, the level of health risk is categorized as a Low, Moderate, High, or Very High Health Risk, as seen in the figure.

Therefore based on the health risk category, a health message is generated. The message is gen-

erated for both the general population and the 'at risk' population (people with existing heart or breathing problems). As an example, if the health risk is Low (an AQHI number between 1 to 3) the health message for the general population is that the air is ideal for outdoor activities, and for the 'at risk' population the message is that the air is enjoyable for outdoor activities.

Whereas, if the health risk were Very High (an AQHI number above 10) the health message

In Manitoba, the provincial government adopted the AQHI in June 2009, and since this time monitoring in Winnipeg has shown that the health risks associated with air quality have been generally low, with an average AQHI number of about two. These air quality problems tend to be local in nature, caused by industrial operations, emissions from vehicles and man-made materials.

Moreover, when Manitoba is compared to Ontario, its air quality problems tend to be less

“This index is designed to help you make decisions to better protect your health during increased levels of air pollution.”

for the general population would be that one should reduce or reschedule strenuous outdoors activities, especially if you experience coughing and throat irritation. The 'at risk' population should avoid strenuous activities outdoors, and children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.

To find the current AQHI for Winnipeg, Manitoba, and for many other cities in Canada go to [www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi](http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi) and follow the links.

significant, since the latter province is home to “the smog capital of Canada,” Windsor (as named by The Weather Network). Although Windsor does not have a specific reported AQHI, the province also feels the effects of poor air quality in the Greater Toronto Area and in Ottawa, both of which report AQHIs. The average AQHI number for Toronto, during the interval of June 2009 to the present, is about three, which is one entire number greater than that of Winnipeg.

These air quality problems tend to occur in part because of Ontario's location northeast of Detroit, Michigan, and other cities in the eastern U.S. that are large emitters of industrial pollution. Therefore, winds blow the pollutants northward and/or northeastward into the Canadian cities.

Other sources of poor air quality tend to be vehicle emissions, industrial processes such as fossil fuel-fired power generation, petroleum refining, and chemical processing.



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