



PRESS RELEASE



Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2005

Toronto Workshop First Step for Canada in Residential Water Re-Use

TORONTO, Ontario, May 24, 2005 — The City of Toronto and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) have teamed up to bring international experts in Rainwater Harvesting to Toronto for a one-day workshop, the first of its kind in Canada.

Canada, long considered a water-rich nation, is currently the second highest residential water consumer in the world at 335 litres/person/day. Second only to the U.S., Canada's rate is double that of European countries including Germany, France, Austria, and Denmark. The concepts of water re-use, particularly rainwater harvesting are becoming an accepted practice world-wide, and this workshop and key meetings the following day will begin to lay the groundwork for a national approach to water re-use in Canada.

"This workshop is an important first step in developing Canadian guidelines for water re-use, and to promote innovative green technology. Effective water re-use can help offset the costs that governments and homeowners might otherwise have to face," said Jim Robar, Director, Technical Research at CMHC. According to a 1996 report by the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy, water infrastructure costs in Canada are estimated to require at least \$40 billion in upgrade costs over the next decade.

"With all the challenges of managing the infrastructure needed for Toronto today and in the future, we're committed to looking at ways we can minimize the strain on the system," said Michael Price, General Manager, Toronto Water. "This workshop and the resulting demonstration projects, will serve to motivate other facilities, developers and Toronto residents to start rethinking the way they use and waste potable water."

Increasingly stringent treatment and discharge requirements, aging infrastructure, and a growing urban population are key factors contributing to the rising costs of municipal water and waste services. Efficient residential water use can offer major energy and resource savings solutions.

The workshop, scheduled to take place in the Metro Hall Council Chambers, will feature three rainwater harvesting experts: Klaus W. König, from Germany; Dr. Peter Coombes, from the University of Newcastle in Australia; and Dr. Hari J. Krishna, Senior Engineer from the Texas Water Development Board and President of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association. The experts will discuss the technical, regulatory, and financial components of rainwater harvesting programs, and their benefits. They will be joined by Dr. Robert Wilkinson of the University of California, Santa Barbara who will discuss the energy component to water provision - a much overlooked but emerging issue.

In its last budget, the Government of Canada announced major investments to preserve our natural environment, to address climate change, and to promoting sustainable communities with investments totalling over \$5 billion over the next five years.

Canadian Mortgage News - Toronto Workshop First Step for Canada in Residential Water Re-Use

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency. For over half a century, CMHC has been contributing to improving the living conditions and the well-being of Canadians through four areas of housing activities - housing finance, assisted housing, research and information transfer, and export promotion. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, and making vibrant and sustainable communities a reality across the country.

For further information, please contact:

Catherine Soroczan
Senior Researcher, CMHC
(613) 748-2284