



TCDSB EARTH HOUR CHALLENGE AND PARTICIPATION **MARCH 29 & 30, 2019**

In order to promote awareness of this event, all TCDSB schools are encouraged to participate in a Board wide initiative on **Friday March 29, 2019 between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.** Once again, **schools are asked to turn off lights where it is safe to do so**, and where it will not adversely disrupt the normal classroom teaching.

On Saturday **March 30, 2019 between 8:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.** all non-essential lighting is to be turned off. Emergency lighting and morality lighting is to remain on. It is the responsibility of each school to ensure that they turn off the lights for this time period.

Facts and Suggestions for school participation can include the following:

IMPORTANT: Before you start planning for Earth Hour, remember to register on the [Board's Environmental Site](#) so your participation can be counted. Registration on the Earth Hour website is not required.

1. Earth Hour began as a single city initiative – in Sydney, Australia. On March 31, 2007, 2.2 million people and 2100 Sydney businesses turned off their lights for one hour - Earth Hour. This massive collective effort reduced Sydney's energy consumption by 10.2% for one hour, which is the equivalent effect of taking 48,000 cars off the road for one hour. Earth Hour has since grown into a global movement with hundreds of millions of people from more than 7,000 cities and towns in 162 countries and territories.
2. Have an Earth Hour assembly or lights-out event in classrooms. If the weather is mild, teachers can also use the great outdoors as a living classroom and lead their students on a nature hike or lesson on the environment. This will encourage students to participate in Earth Hour at home with their families the next day. More importantly, students will be empowered to take positive actions that will make a difference in our planet's future.
3. Post Earth Hour Signage in the school lobby inviting parents and school guests to join your school's Earth Hour celebrations on March 29th to promote your school's participation in Earth Hour to neighbourhood groups and nearby schools.
4. The TCDSB Communications Department will alert local media of the Board's Earth Hour plans.
5. Advise parents/guardians about Earth Hour and that your school will be holding a symbolic Earth Hour event on Friday March 29th. Use your website, outdoor sign or voice mail/email messages to encourage families to participate in Earth Hour on Saturday March 30th. You can also include suggestions on other ways to help reduce waste at school. For example, packing "[Waste Free Lunches](#)" in reusable containers and beverages in reusable bottles, and avoiding using items such as aluminium foil, saran wrap, and juice boxes.
6. Welcome your school-designated Earth Hour with a "countdown" to generate student awareness and excitement around the event.

7. Transform your cafeteria or gymnasium into a movie theatre! Start a learning activity on the environment with an environmentally-themed movie. Consider movies like An Inconvenient Truth, The 11th Hour, Winged Migration, Arctic Tale or The Great Polar Bear Adventure.
8. Create your own school poster or use the Board poster. [TCDSB Earth Hour Site](#).
9. Take pictures of your Earth Hour celebrations and create a photo wall display. Ask students to add to it by bringing in pictures showing how their family spent Earth Hour and hold a photo contest for the most creative ideas.
10. Create your own Earth Hour ideas and share them with the TCDSB Environment Committee! Tweet at #TCDSBEarthHour how your school is celebrating Earth Hour.
11. **Use the Earth Hour event to start an environmental team/club which can lead towards becoming a future certified EcoSchool.** Contact a TCDSB EcoTeam member to find out more by going to <http://www.tcdsb.org/Board/environment/EcoSchools/Pages/default.aspx>

Operational suggestions for your school and board office buildings:

Talk to your staff and any community groups that use your building about how to make Earth Hour safe and successful.

- **Exterior of building** – ensure that external lights and parking lot lights are turned off where possible, keeping safety / security lighting in mind.
- **Hallway lights** – reduce to minimal lighting to ensure student and staff safety, in accordance with the school’s occupational safety policy.
- **Classroom lights** – turn off if this does not adversely disrupt the normal classroom teaching.
- **Staff Areas** – ensure non-essential lights are turned off including staff lounge, principal’s office and reception area.
- **Gymnasiums / Cafeterias / Library** – turn lights to a minimum in these areas and post signs or a poster to let visitors to the school know about your Earth Hour commitments.

After the Earth Hour Event

Keep the Earth Hour momentum going and bring the power of the environment into your classroom with these handy tools:

Schools for a Living Planet is a WWF-Canada program that offers educators free access to over 30 curriculum-linked, printable, in-class activities for grades 3 to 8. Each grade’s unit has a unique environmental theme with materials carefully designed to meet curriculum expectations in English, Social Studies and Science. And it’s easy to use – download what you want, when you want, the choice is yours.

English Resources: <http://schools.wwf.ca/GetInvolved/LearnMore/78/80>

French Resources: <http://ecoles.wwf.ca/>

Ready, Set, Green! is a collection of tips, techniques, and resources used by Ontario educators. Prepared by the Ministry of Education, the guide includes many innovative projects and programs that have been developed by schools and boards across the province.

Download a copy from www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/environment.html.

The *Ontario Education Resource Bank* also contains thousands of teacher-shared resources, including lesson plans, activities, maps, and interactive multimedia objects, including environment related activities. Materials range from kindergarten to grade 12 and are searchable by grade, course/subject, strand, overall expectations, and keyword. Visit www.elearningontario.com.

E-zone is a website created by the Ministry of Environment to give elementary students and teachers access to dynamic, practical, and inspiring information on environmental issues. Encouraging children to learn, share and act, E-zone teaches them about climate change, smog, recycling, conservation and other environmental topics. It also offers teacher resources, like themed posters, activity sheets, and colouring pages. Visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/e-zone>