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EARTH HOUR™

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Earth Hour?

Earth Hour is an annual international lights out event happening on Saturday, March 27 at 8:30 p.m. The goal is to get as many individuals and businesses as possible to turn off their lights for one hour to raise awareness about climate change and demonstrate that people are ready to take personal action and that in turn, people expect more engagement on behalf of the government.

2. How will Earth Hour help?

Earth Hour shows that, together, our small actions can make a big difference to help fight climate change. Last year, over 10 million Canadians turned off their lights for Earth Hour in a show of concern to the government. This demonstrates that people are taking personal action to reduce their footprint and that they expect the same level of commitment from government.

WWF-Canada has also launched a new online campaign called the [Living Planet Community](#) which allows people to commit to personal actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and track subsequent reductions attain through these practices. Members of the [Living Planet Community](#) will also be able to see the total CO₂ reductions across Canada and by province, to see their part in this bigger commitment to making change.

3. Why should I participate?

Climate change is the biggest environmental threat to our planet and the number one concern for Canadians. We are already seeing its impacts. Participating in Earth Hour is a simple way to show that you want to be a part of the solution and sends a powerful message to others that together we can make a difference.

Also, in 2012, the Kyoto Accord, the most significant international agreement to control greenhouse gas emissions, will expire.

In June 2010, Canada will play host to the G8 and G20 Summits – meetings where the most powerful heads of state come together to discuss the world's most pressing issues including climate change. It is important to come to a new climate agreement which extends past Kyoto. The process needs to be started now because it will take 2-3 years for ratification and to ensure a seamless transition.

4. When and where did Earth Hour begin?



Earth Hour has grown from a single event in Sydney, Australia in 2007 to a global phenomenon that occurred across six continents in 2008. In 2009 the event reached over 1 billion people. This year we expect it to be even bigger.

5. How will you measure success?

Success will be measured by participation and by the darkness during Earth Hour. To measure participation we will look at online sign-ups, as well as complete post-event polling. Hydro companies around the country will also measure the impact on the electrical grid.

Households and businesses can also measure usage by comparing energy bills. Both the dollar amount and the average daily usage in kilowatt hours (kWh) can serve as indicators by comparing them with previous energy bills. Visually we can also measure success by observing the lights going out simultaneously on March 27 at 8:30 p.m.

6. Who can participate and how?

Everyone is encouraged to participate – individuals, businesses, schools, and organizations. All you have to do is:

- Sign-up online at www.EarthHourCanada.org
- Turn off your lights for Earth Hour on March 27 at 8:30 p.m.
- Help us make the event a success by telling your family, friends and local businesses
- Download materials like posters, screensavers, etc. on the Earth Hour website.

7. What does Earth Hour mean for our business?

Earth Hour is not about telling companies how to conduct business. Rather it is about individual action and an opportunity for businesses to help reduce energy usage within their communities. We are encouraging businesses to turn off their exterior lights, including signs, as well as internal lights (excluding lighting for safety), and to ask their employees and customers to participate.

8. What did Earth Hour 2009 accomplish?

In Canada, though there was no specific legislative agenda in mind with Earth Hour, the message was heard on Parliament Hill. Here are some of the environmental successes that have been achieved since Earth Hour:

- Over half the Canadian adult population (over 10 million people) switched off their lights in a show of support for action on climate change.
- Earth Hour has become the largest environmental movement in history and put climate change on the forefront for world leaders.
- This was clearly demonstrated in Copenhagen last December where leaders met with hopes of coming to a new global deal.
- Although the deal was not achieved, all leaders and key players acknowledged and agreed on a common goal - put forward by WWF - that global temperatures must be kept to less than 2 degrees Celsius.
- These talks will be continued in Canada in June where the G8 and G20 summits will be held.

9. Will there be any events this year during Earth Hour?

Yes, there will be many events taking place across the country. Check out www.EarthHourCanada.org to learn more about what is happening in your community. WWF-Canada will be hosting an event in Toronto at Yonge & Dundas Square. Starting at 5:30 pm on Saturday, March 27th, come enjoy a free concert and share your message for the planet with thousands of others. Enjoy great entertainment and activities and be a part of the global movement!

10. Who is this event for?

This is a family event. Parents and kids are all welcome. The more the merrier!

11. How green will this event be?

WWF-Canada has taken every step to ensure the event is as environmentally responsible as possible. This event will be entirely powered by green electricity provided by Bullfrog Power. Additionally, all of the lights that will be used at the event will be energy efficient LED lights. The trees will all be potted trees and can be planted at a later date. The wishes will be printed on FSC certified paper.

12. How do I enter the contest this year?

From March 1-25th Canadians are invited to post their video or photo essay online that outlines how they make Earth Hour, Every Hour – from washing in cold water to organizing a community recycling program. Visit www.EarthHourCanada.org to learn more.

13. Can I still enter the contest if I don't submit a video or photo essay?

Yes, Canadians can still be eligible to win weekly prizes just by voting for their favourite entry.

14. Can I enter the contest if I live in Quebec?

Yes, the contest is open to residents of Quebec

15. What are the contest prizes?

The grand prize is a trip for two to Churchill, Manitoba to see the polar bears and to experience firsthand the effects of climate change on Canada's landscape and Northern communities.

Weekly prizes include a Luminova telescope, an energy efficient Bosch appliance, a bed set made from environmentally responsible materials, and a Samsung energy efficient flat screen television.

16. How can schools participate?

Schools can register online at www.EarthHourCanada.org and are encouraged to hold symbolic Earth Hour events in classrooms on Friday, March 26 – the day before Earth Hour. This is a great opportunity to engage your students in a discussion about climate change and the impact that our actions can have. There are downloadable materials available online to help celebrate.

17. Who has committed to participating in Earth Hour?

Hundreds of businesses and thousands of people around the world and throughout Canada have already registered their commitment at www.EarthHourCanada.org. These numbers grow every day. Registration is free and helps WWF better determine how many Canadians have committed to participating.

18. How many people took part in Earth Hour last year?

Over 10 million adult Canadians participated in more than 275 cities and municipalities across the country. Around the world, millions more participated in more than 80 countries.

19. Will this become an annual event?

Yes, but the cities participating may change. Solving the problem of climate change requires a long-term commitment. The plan is to make Earth Hour an annual event so we can engage more and more people around the world in the process of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

20. How does turning off the lights for one hour help the planet?

Turning off the lights for Earth Hour, along with millions of other people and businesses around the world, sends a signal of concern about the state of the planet and your commitment to take action to fight climate change.

Lighting uses about 5 to 15 per cent of electricity in the residential sector and over one third (approximately 37 per cent) of electricity in offices. By eliminating inefficient lighting, consumers and businesses could save millions of dollars while drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

21. Will I be obligated to turn out my lights in this fashion every day?

Our goal is to have Earth Hour be your platform for future behavior change. Turning off your lights is one example of how taking simple steps in your lifestyle can make a big impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions – the biggest contributor to climate change. Our hope is that Earth Hour will inspire people to keep taking this type of action every day. For example, recycling, composting, using compact fluorescent light bulbs, etc.

To help support your continued efforts, WWF-Canada has created the [Living Planet Community](#), a fun and interactive online community for concerned Canadians who want to stop just talking about climate change and start taking action. Registrants on the site can access tips, information, and even track their personal reduction in CO2 over the long term. For more information on what you can do after Earth Hour, visit [wwf.ca](http://www.wwf.ca).

22. Is switching off the lights dangerous?

No. It is no different than switching off your lights each night and then switching them back each day. Hydro companies are also prepared for the drop in energy use.

23. Are there public safety concerns with Earth Hour?

We are only asking people to turn off non-essential lights for Earth Hour – no lights that affect public safety will or should be turned off. All emergency services are also aware that Earth Hour is happening.

24. Will street lights remain on?

Yes. Earth Hour is to be celebrated in a safe and secure environment. Streetlights or lights in public spaces, hospitals and emergency services will remain on. Traffic conditions will remain unchanged as well. Only non-essential lighting will be switched off during Earth Hour.

25. Are a lot of resources being used to promote this event?

Earth Hour is a carbon neutral event. We are taking all the appropriate steps to ensure we leave as little impact as possible. Our goal is to turn out as many non-essential lights as possible and use only sustainable power where possible.

26. How can I find out more?

Visit www.EarthHourCanada.org