

MEDIA RELEASE - For Immediate Release

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Sustainable Action Canmore Needs You

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley and the Town of Canmore are working together on a new community-wide door-to-door project to promote sustainability and sustainable action in Canmore.

This program, Sustainable Action Canmore, starts this week and will continue through October. Canvassers will be going door-to-door to all Canmore residences asking them to commit to a sustainable change to reduce green-house gas emissions, waste or water use. This includes helping residents commit to their choice of four sustainable actions by providing each home with a *free* action item:

- a low-flow shower-head to replace their existing high-flow one
- a vehicle tire pressure gauge to check tire pressure monthly
- a compact fluorescent light bulb in exchange for their old incandescent or
- a re-usable bag instead of plastic

A small pilot project, conducted in the fall of 2007, demonstrated strong householder support for the program with more than 75% of those talked to, participating in the program. “We have a terrific group of people starting canvassing this week and we hope each household will welcome them and participate in the program” says Sally Caudill, Communication and Environmental Care Coordinator with the Town of Canmore.

The project is based on the principles of community-based social marketing (CBSM) which has emerged as an effective alternative for delivering programs that foster sustainable behaviour. Social marketing is essentially the practice of using commercial marketing strategies to persuade people to adopt new social behaviours, and community-based social marketing programs seek to encourage new thinking and practices within a defined community.

“The plan is to visit every household in Canmore to offer one of the four free products to help make the household more sustainable” says Melanie Watt, Executive Director of the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley. “These programs are known to reinforce overall commitments to sustainability and so their impacts go beyond these simple actions. The program is unique in Canada and results will be used to help other communities design effective social marketing programs.”

This program is made possible through a partnership of the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley and the Town of Canmore with the financial support of funders including the Alberta Real Estate Foundation. For more information, please visit the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley’s website at www.biosphereinstitute.org.