



SD42 Bimonthly Sustainability and Energy Management Newsletter

An initiative by the SD42 Energy and Environmental Sustainability Division under the Facilities Department

ISSUE NO. 4 – MAY 2025

About Us

Sustainability is one of the defining movements of our time and students continue to play a vital role.

The Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District facilities department works with BC Hydro, FortisBC, and CleanBC to improve energy efficiency, reduce our carbon footprint, and lower operating costs across schools.

This bimonthly newsletter is designed to share the district's sustainability initiatives with the community. Throughout the district, students and staff are taking meaningful action to help build a more sustainable future – for our schools, our community, and the world.

We want to hear from you. What sustainability actions are you taking? How are you making a difference? We are always looking for more stories and would like students to contribute as writers for future issues.

Calendar of Events

MAY

Waste Sorting Site Visit

The facilities department will visit a waste sorting facility with a partner group.

Carbon Reporting to the Ministry

The district will submit its [Climate Change Accountability Report](#) to the ministry, including details on emissions, projects undertaken to reduce emissions, and plans.

JUNE

Holiday Shutdown Campaign

Before the summer break, the energy and environmental sustainability division will organize a holiday shutdown campaign.

NEXT SCHOOL YEAR

Sustainability-Focused Training for Custodian Staff

The facilities department is planning sustainability-focused training sessions for custodian staff, aimed at sharing industry best practices.

Waste Audits in Schools

The district will conduct waste audits at six schools, selected based on their waste diversion rates. These audits are designed to educate students and staff about best practices in waste management.

Tree Plantation Drive (Joint Initiative with the City of Maple Ridge)

The district will undertake a tree plantation drive at various parks.

Tree Plantation Drive (Joint Initiative with the City of Maple Ridge)

The facilities department will collaborate with the City of Maple Ridge to finalize the date and location for organizing a tree plantation drive.

With funding (Growing Canada's Community Canopies program) in place to support increased tree planting across the city, the City and the district will partner on this initiative to both enhance urban green spaces and provide a meaningful educational experience. The goal is to engage students in climate action by helping them understand the role of trees and plants in mitigating climate change.

The tree plantation will happen around National Tree Day in the fall of 2025. The district's energy and environmental sustainability manager will contact the selected schools for their participation.

District Interactive Sustainability Workshop

On January 28th, the Energy and Environmental Sustainability division organized an in-person sustainability workshop for teachers and administrators. The workshop focused on promoting energy conservation and sustainability in the classroom and featured presenters from various subject areas who shared resources available to support sustainability efforts in schools.



The agenda included sessions on climate change education, lesson plans from BC Hydro's PowerSmart for Schools program, the EcoSchools framework, waste management practices in schools, and the use of alternative paper products. Participants also explored innovative solutions for reducing single-use plastics in schools through solutions offered by Friendlier Plastics. The workshop concluded with a survey inviting teachers to commit to implementing at least one initiative at their school this year.



Overall Satisfaction

100% of participants were very satisfied with the workshop.

Key Highlights

Participants appreciated:

- BC Hydro resources and PowerSmart for Schools.
- Guest speakers who provided tangible, actionable solutions.
- Practical eco-solutions for district-wide implementation.
- Interactive presentations and engaging discussions.

Most Beneficial Topics

- Eco-Schools Certification (83%)
- PowerSmart for Schools (66%)
- Waste Management in Schools (66%)
- Friendlier Plastics (66%)
- Sugar Sheets (66%)

Planned Sustainability Initiatives for Schools

- Eco Challenge Competitions (67%)
- Waste Audits (67%)
- Garden/Tree Planting (67%)
- Energy Audits with Students (50%)
- Earth Day Climate March (50%)
- Mechanical "In-School" Field Trips (50%)
- Additional suggestion: Collaborate with Indigenous communities on conservation activities.

Personal Commitments by Participants

- Teaching sustainability lessons in classrooms.
- Creating Green Teams and leading student eco clubs.
- Promoting Sugar Sheets at their schools.
- Using PowerSmart resources and implementing recycling programs.

District Sustainability Interactive Workshop

SUMMARY REPORT

Next Steps

- 100% of participants committed to implementing their actions within the next six months.
- 83% expressed interest in being a sustainability contact for their school.
- Several educators were open to sharing their initiatives in the Energy Catalyst newsletter.
- All participants were interested in trying Sugar Sheets at their schools.

Participant feedback

"Thank you so much for putting this together. I feel like we need to be louder in the district to prioritize this work and education to get more engagement, buy in, championship, leadership and endorsements from the school and district leaders in order to shift or collective culture."

"Many! I think looking at our food procurement in combination with Friendlier could greatly reduce waste. I also think an electric fleet of school buses would take cars off the road and further reduce carbon emissions. I'm also interested in if the new school builds will be using eco-friendly materials, or what options for that would look like beyond concrete/brick."

"Your enthusiasm is contagious!"

"I really liked hearing about what sustainability initiatives are starting in our district. I am hoping that the newsletter and efforts become more widely available. I liked the idea of sharing statistics and possible sustainable changes at principals' meetings so that the information can also be shared at staff meetings. I feel that this would raise awareness and add sustainability into the regular dialogue at each school. This could help shift culture in buildings where it is currently not talked about in the school community as a whole. There should also be an area within each school's growth plan where principals need to report on a sustainability goal each year."

I would like to thank all participants and presenters for their time and effort in making this event a huge success.

TravelSmart4Kids – A Translink Initiative

A team of school districts, municipalities, health authorities, regional and provincial governments, led by Translink, created *TravelSmart4Kids* to encourage active school travel that's safe, healthy, and sustainable, helping future generations learn how to navigate a multi-modal transportation network. This is a regional, coordinated strategy to promote active and sustainable transportation for children between the ages of 0 to 12 in Metro Vancouver, including walking, cycling, rolling, and taking transit.

Translink has released a new infographic (shown below) on the health benefits of active travel for children. When kids bike, walk, ride, and roll, they experience improved brain and physical health, more opportunities for play and independent mobility, and enhanced community well-being.

Please email ashish_dev@sd42.ca to request copies of this infographic and map.



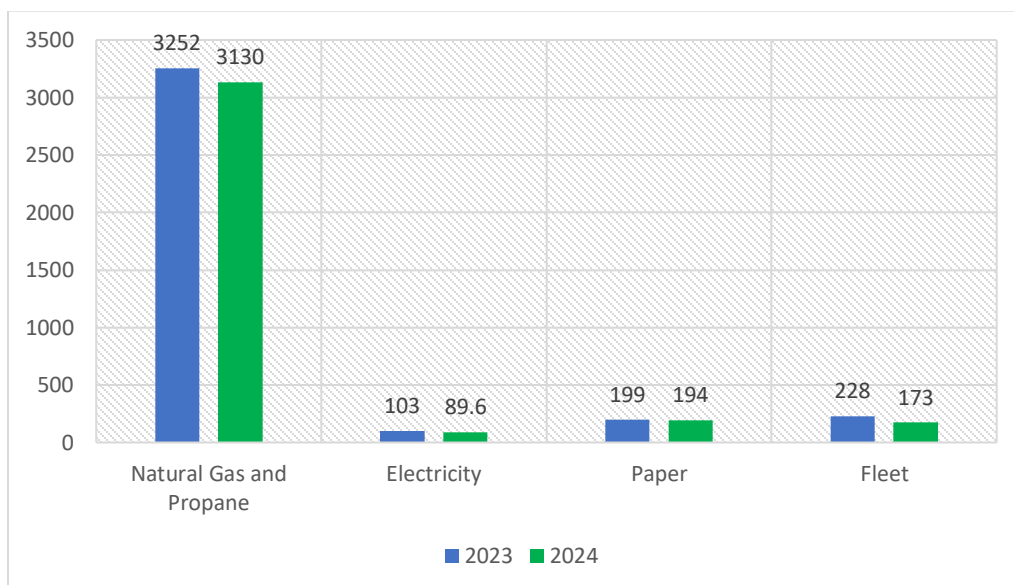
EV chargers at Edith McDermott Elementary

The district recently installed two new EV chargers at Edith McDermott Elementary, continuing efforts to expand the EV charging network across both cities. The district has received incentive from NRCAN and BC Hydro to install these chargers. If you're interested in accessing our EV chargers – or would like your school considered for a future installation – please feel free to connect with us.



CARBON REPORTING FOR CY 2024

The district continues to support BC's Climate Action legislation and the targets established by the [Climate Change Accountability Act](#). As a public sector organization, the district is required to report its emissions to the ministry and purchase offsets to maintain carbon neutrality. For the 2024 calendar year, the district's emissions dropped by 5.2% - from 3,783 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) in 2023 to 3,586 tCO₂e.



Alternate Paper: Appeal to move to Sugar Sheets

Paper is the second largest contributor to the district's emissions profile, and SD42 is actively working to reduce paper consumption. For the last five years, the district has used PaperCut to help raise awareness among staff about their printing habits. However, paper use has increased over the last 4 years. To reverse this trend, the district is encouraging staff to adopt paperless practices – such as defaulting to digital signing, enabling double-sided printing on all devices, and exploring alternative paper options to reduce emissions.

Table 1: Carbon Footprints of Common Paper Types*	
Type of Paper	Carbon Footprint
• 100% recycled • Sugarcane bagasse	Lowest
• Wood fibre with 30 - 70% recycled	Medium
• Wood fibre with 0% recycled (virgin paper)	Highest

One such alternative is Sugar Sheet paper, made from sugarcane waste (bagasse). The district's maintenance office has successfully tested Sugar Sheet paper for the past eight months, reducing emissions by more than 100 kg CO₂e. Recent research by the Climate Action Secretariat confirms that sugarcane bagasse paper and 100% recycled wood pulp paper have the lowest carbon footprint of available options. A district-wide switch could reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by up to 65 tonnes annually and achieve an estimated yearly net savings of \$26K (including reduced paper costs and lower carbon-neutral offset payments to the Ministry of Finance).

The purchasing department has secured special pricing on sugar sheet paper from One Source Office Solutions at \$55.00 per box, with no minimum order quantity. All schools have been provided with login details and instructions for ordering.

We encourage all schools to begin using Sugar Sheet paper and help reduce the district's carbon footprint.

Heating Plant Upgrades last year

Last year, the district completed a heating plant upgrade at Laity View Elementary and the maintenance facility to reduce natural gas consumption and, in turn, reduce GHG emissions.



Old Atmospheric Boilers



New Condensing Boilers

SCHOOL	PROJECT SCOPE	STATUS	FUNDING SOURCE	COST	ENERGY CONSERVATION SAVINGS **(GJ/kWh)
Laity View Elementary	Boiler Plant Upgrade: Replace existing boilers with 3x399 MBH IBC boilers	Completed	Annual Facilities Grant (2024)	\$230,877	145 GJ
Maintenance Facility	Boiler Plant Upgrade: Replace existing boilers with 4x399 MBH IBC boilers	Completed	Annual Facilities Grant (2024)	\$151,803	169 GJ

**Estimated

The district is also completing a boiler plant upgrade at Edith McDermott Elementary and replacing a cooling-only unit with a heat pump to provide electrical heating and cooling support. This will reduce natural gas use. The project includes other energy conservation measures such as variable speed drives, rebalancing, and recommissioning.

What is going on at your school?

If you or your school are taking steps to support environmental sustainability, we'd love to hear about it – and share your story in an upcoming issue of our newsletter.

Please contact:

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