

Cutting down on disposable waste ...

Cafeterias make switch to china

by Sheena Jarvis

York's largest food outlets have switched from styrofoam to washable china dishes, in a move that campus environmentalists are calling a victory.

The Marriott company, which operates large cafeterias in Stong, Founders and Winters colleges, decided this month to switch most of their service from styrofoam contain-

ers to washable dishes.

Styrofoam products are made using chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which are believed to cause permanent damage to the Earth's ozone layer. They also cannot easily be recycled and do not decompose in landfills.

The move is a success for Envision York, an on-campus environmental "watchdog" group formed by students last year.

Jon Burke, one of the co-facilitators at Envision York, said the change has been a long time coming.

"The school has a lot of pressure on it to become environmentally conscious," Burke said. "We have to pressure [York] to move quicker."

According to figures obtained by Envision York, Marriott used an estimated 9,742,500 styrofoam cups, plates, take-out containers and white plastic cutlery items in 1990.

Suzanne Cullen, director of Marriott at York, said Marriott will be able to replace about 95 per cent of their styrofoam products with china. Marriott is still looking for non-styrofoam takeout containers, she added.

Burke said Envision York is pleased with the change and would like to see York's other caterers follow suit.

Mary and Bert Salvetti, co-owners of Elite caterers which operates the Central Square cafeteria, said they would not consider eliminating styrofoam packages unless the university were to help out — for example, by installing new dishwashers in the cafeteria.

In the meantime, the Salvettis said

they are looking at switching to alternative packaging to reduce waste.

Burke said that once Envision York has shown that the china program can work, they will try to get other catering companies on campus to switch.

Right now Envision York is concentrating on education within the York community to get the students involved in the environmental issues of waste reduction and management.

Burke says people also need to concentrate on cutting down the amount of waste they produce.

"Recycling is a great idea," he said, "but it's not the only idea."

Envision York has just won a \$3,206 grant from Metro Toronto Public Works to make notepads from used photocopy paper.

Old trees saved from destruction

by Maggie Borch

A row of nineteenth-century trees will be saved from destruction after a last-ditch effort by an on-campus environmental group.

Members of Envision York — an environmental pressure group organized by York students last year — say they were partially successful in their fight to preserve the historic Stong-Kaiser Hedgerow.

The Stong-Kaiser Hedgerow, which runs parallel with Chimneystack Road, was built as a boundary in between farms. It contains century old trees including ash, elm, pear, apple, and basswood. The oldest tree is a white oak thirty-eight inches in diameter.

The hedgerow was threatened by the construction of the Harry Sherman Crowe Housing Cooperative, a housing project planned for Chimneystack road, to the east of Winters college.

The Housing Cooperative's plans

have been in the works for over three years. The design consisted of a nine storey townhouse complex.

Last week, the Housing Cooperative's Board accepted Envision York's proposal. In the original plan the hedgerow would be eliminated completely by the new buildings. The new proposal moves the townhouses to the south of the hedgerow, lessening the effect.

Mitch Blass, a member of Envision York, says the new plan will "save roughly half the trees."

Although Envision York wasn't pleased about losing half of the hedgerow they acknowledge the importance of the development to the university and its students.

The proposal for saving the hedgerow is only one project undertaken by Envision York.

The Green Campus Project attempts to show natural environment on campus.

Two Environmental Studies students, Jean Marc Daigle and Donna

Havinga, have mapped every natural feature on campus — from small trees to distinct natural areas.

When the Green Campus map is overlaid with the Campus Master Plan one can see where environmental areas are and how further development would effect it.

Jean Marc Daigle, organizer of the Green Campus Project stated how ironic the York situation is, "We found 145 impacts happening over this campus and in the same university where we just began an Environmental Science Program."

Now that the situation at the hedgerow is settled, Envision York is concerned the York University Development Corporation will continue to ignore the Green Campus Project.

Envision York says they hope the hedgerow compromise will start a change of attitude.

Members of Envision York say they are sick of the 'level-it-and-build' attitude of the university and hope to stop the campus from becoming a massive lot of concrete.

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