

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Many opportunities for Cowichan residents to reduce emissions on Earth Day

DUNCAN, BC – In recognition of Earth Day, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) is encouraging residents to ‘invest in our planet’ and take local action towards positive change in our communities and on our global climate.

For example, considering how to reduce our personal impact on local air quality is one way to take action. The CVRD and its partners have completed the installation of an air quality sensor network across the Cowichan region, so residents can see the air quality of their neighbourhood in real-time through the [Air Quality Map](#) on the CVRD website. In addition to reducing the amount of open burning on their properties and negative health impacts from smoke, residents can access rebates for replacing their old woodstoves with modern heating systems like heat pumps through the [Woodstove Replacement Program](#). For more air quality improvement actions, see the [CVRD Airshed Protection Strategy](#).

Considering alternatives to using personal motorized vehicles is another important step towards reducing emissions and contributing to improved air quality in our region. Using BC Transit routes, including the new [Nanaimo-Cowichan Express](#) service, is an easy way to make a difference and save money. Accessing one of the many [multi-purpose trails](#) across the Cowichan region to commute by foot or bike is another option for reducing a trip by car and making a meaningful, personal change. Those residents who have invested in electrical vehicles can take advantage of one of 40 publicly accessible EV charging stations in the region. To learn more about future plans for human-powered transportation infrastructure and provide input, connect with the [Regional Active Transportation Plan](#) at [Plan Your Cowichan](#).

“So often our regular routines, while convenient and time-efficient, have an avoidable environmental impact if we’re willing to go a little bit outside of our comfort zone become more accountable for our actions,” said Lori Iannidinardo, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “This year for Earth Day we’re encouraging everyone to take a moment and think about their daily carbon footprint, and try something new or different that signifies a step in the positive direction.”

Another way Cowichan residents can make a small change with a big impact is by reducing their household waste. Over 30% of the garbage in the Cowichan region contains material that could be composted instead of shipped to landfill. Reducing food waste and adding a backyard composter for unavoidable food waste like coffee grinds and banana peels is one way to help reduce emissions related to transporting our collective waste. While backyard composting isn’t feasible for all residents, the CVRD is also in the process of introducing three-stream (organics, recycling and garbage) curbside collection to all nine electoral areas, and is now seeking public input on the [Three-Stream Curbside Service](#) through [Plan Your Cowichan](#).

“In 2021 the Cowichan region collected and shipped more garbage to landfill than ever before, so the time could not be better for us to explore changes to how we do things in our homes and as a region,” said Melissa Tokarek, Manager of Recycling & Waste Management for the Cowichan

Valley Regional District. “Input from our residents is essential to ensuring we’re creating the best possible curbside collection service to meet the regional [Solid Waste Management Plan](#) goal of zero waste creation over the next two decades.”

For more ideas on how to have a global climate impact this Earth Day, visit www.earthday.org.

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