

## Go for a bike ride, take a walk or learn to garden for Earth Day

By **MICHAEL LIGHTSTONE** City Hall Reporter

Earth Day is Thursday and this year's event in Canada will happen about three weeks after published news reports said the federal government is planning changes to the way it handles key environmental issues.

On the vehicle emissions front, Ottawa and Washington are joining forces to impose fuel-efficiency improvements on auto makers and clamp down on air pollution produced by their fleets.

News of the stricter rules came the same day that reports said the Harper government is intending to change the way it does environmental assessments, prompting critics to charge that Ottawa is gutting its review process while eliciting applause from industry officials who said less red tape should lead to faster projects.

"With the federal government stepping aside from many assessments, a larger number will be left in provincial hands," the Globe and Mail reported on April 1.

In Halifax Regional Municipality, city hall has arranged Earth Day activities this week for young and old. Metro residents — many of them students — will join more than six million Canadians and one billion people worldwide in addressing local environmental issues.

Community events here include:

- Noon bicycle ride Thursday from the Grand Parade in Halifax. Organized by the Halifax Cycling Coalition, Clean Nova Scotia and Halifax Regional Police. Bring your bike helmet.
- At 5:30 p.m., join the staff and youth leaders of metro's Adventure Earth Centre for an evening walk and nature activities in placid Fleming Park by the North-west Arm.
- Join the Ecology Action Centre and the Goodness Grows Dartmouth Gardening Association at the back of the Findlay Community Centre, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., to learn how to grow potatoes in small, urban spaces using vertical potato towers.

The estimated cost to host these events is less than \$500, said a recent city hall staff report prepared for Halifax council.

[milightstone@herald.ca](mailto:milightstone@herald.ca)

Powered by [TECNAVIA](#)

Copyright (c)2010 The Halifax Herald Limited 04/20/2010