



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Creation of ChemTRAC Toxics Reduction Grants Program through Live Green Toronto

Date:	July 29, 2010
To:	Board of Health and Budget Committee
From:	Medical Officer of Health and Director Toronto Environment Office
Wards:	All Wards
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

Toronto's new ChemTRAC program is designed to protect public health and stimulate the greening of local businesses by tracking and reducing toxic chemicals found in the local environment. The program includes the Environmental Reporting and Disclosure Bylaw (Municipal Code Chapter 423), which came into force January 1, 2010. Toronto Public Health coordinates ChemTRAC in partnership with the Toronto Environment Office, Economic Development and Culture, Toronto Water and other city divisions.

ChemTRAC is a key part of City Council's efforts to improve environmental sustainability within the corporation and among its residents, businesses and community organizations. It adds support for toxics reduction to the suite of City environmental programs such as those encouraging water conservation, energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction. This program will identify new opportunities for many Toronto businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, to reduce or find safer alternatives for toxic chemicals that enter our local environment from their operations.

Toronto Public Health seeks to partner with the Toronto Environment Office to establish a grants program that would offer a total of \$50,000 in toxics reduction grants through the "Live Green Community Investment Program," on an annual basis beginning in 2010. The grants would be directed to eligible business associations, non-profit organizations and labour groups to provide training, education, pilot programs and community partnerships to promote reduction of toxic chemicals, particularly those listed under the Environmental Reporting and Disclosure Bylaw. Toronto Environment Office would administer the grants program through the Live Green Community Investment Program, which offers an established infrastructure to enable Toronto Public Health to commence

offering grants as early as Fall 2010. This report requests that City Council grant authority to the Toronto Environment Office to administer these toxics reduction grants in collaboration with Toronto Public Health. The Director of the Toronto Environment Office concurs with the recommendations in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health and the Director, Toronto Environment Office recommend that:

1. City Council grant authority to the Toronto Environment Office to administer the toxics reduction grants under the Live Green Community Investment Program, on an annual basis beginning in 2010, and to make any necessary adjustments to the Live Green Community Investment Program in order to accommodate the addition of the toxics reduction grants;
2. City Council delegate authority to the Director, Toronto Environment Office and the Medical Officer of Health, to award funds, totalling \$50,000 in 2010, for the toxics reduction grants under the Live Green Community Investment Program;
3. City Council direct the Medical Officer of Health in collaboration with the Director, Toronto Environment Office to report annually to the Board of Health on the grants program and any proposed changes deemed necessary; and
4. the Budget Committee forward this report to the Executive Committee meeting of August 16, 2010 for its consideration.

Financial Impact

The proposed grants program will be administered by the Toronto Environment Office, and funded within the Toronto Public Health Approved Operating Budget. Funds in the amount of \$50,000 are available in the 2010 Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

On December 3, 2008, City Council adopted the Environmental Reporting, Disclosure and Innovation Program, which included the Environmental Reporting and Disclosure Bylaw (Municipal Code Chapter 423). This program, now called ChemTRAC, is designed to protect public health and stimulate the greening of local facilities by tracking and reducing toxic chemicals found in Toronto's environment.

As part of the program, Council approved funds for Toronto Public Health to develop and implement a pollution prevention program that provides pollution prevention resources and outreach to Toronto facilities.

The decision history of this process can be found at <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-17196.pdf>.

The Medical Officer of Health provided an update on ChemTRAC implementation to the Board of Health on June 28, 2010. The report is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-31543.pdf>.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Preventing pollution to reduce exposure to toxics is a priority of the ChemTRAC program. Toronto Public Health is developing and implementing initiatives that encourage businesses to reduce or eliminate 25 priority substances and adopt environmental best practices for pollution prevention. The program includes outreach and supports to Toronto facilities.

Toronto Public Health's implementation of ChemTRAC is consistent with the 2008 Ontario Public Health Standards (OPS), specifically the Health Hazard Prevention and Management Standard. Objectives within this standard include increasing capacity on the part of the public and community partners to address the risk factors that reduce health hazard exposure and diseases.

The ChemTRAC program is part of the City of Toronto's Climate Change Action Plan, which identifies actions that the city is taking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. The Live Green Community Investment Program (CIP) is also part of the action plan and it has related objectives to ChemTRAC and the OPS Health Hazard Prevention Standard. The Live Green CIP is intended to help build capacity within the community to identify, develop and initiate collective actions that address the issues of climate change and clean air.

COMMENTS

ChemTRAC will stimulate significant changes in the way many businesses track and use chemicals in Toronto. The program and bylaw are anticipated to involve approximately 5,000 to 7,000 facilities across Toronto. Many of these are small- to medium-sized businesses, such as auto body shops, drycleaners, printing operations and manufacturing facilities.

Toronto Public Health is collaborating with other City divisions to provide guidance materials and technical assistance to help businesses prepare for the bylaw and to learn about options for reducing or eliminating chemicals. This proposed grants program will respond to an important need that business associations, community organizations and

labour groups have identified for pilot programs, education resources and skills training for business sectors and workers.

The toxics reduction grants would be structured as follows:

- A total of \$50,000 would be available each year, beginning in 2010;
- The program would provide individual grants of up to \$25,000 to non-profit business associations, non-profit organizations, labour and community groups to support projects that facilitate small business innovation and greening, specifically through activities that reduce or eliminate toxic chemicals;
- Acceptable activities for funding would include training, education or pilot programs that help businesses/sectors assess chemical use and/or release and undertake pollution prevention planning as well as partnerships between businesses and communities to achieve toxics reduction. Special consideration would be given to projects that build partnerships between facilities and vulnerable communities.

The Toronto Environment Office has agreed to incorporate these toxics reduction grants as a new category in the existing Live Green Community Investment Program (CIP). (http://www.toronto.ca/livegreen/greenneighbourhood_rebates_cip.htm).

The Live Green CIP was established under City Council authority, and Council authority must be sought for any changes to the program. In May of 2010, Toronto Water received Council authority for the Toronto Environment Office to administer the Community Program for Stormwater Management through the Live Green CIP. Since a mechanism to administer community based environmental grants already exists, it is recommended that, for efficiency of administration, the new toxics reduction grants also be administered through the “one window” of the Toronto Environment Office. This would help eliminate confusion for those seeking funding and help manage City funded projects.

Toronto Public Health will provide the funding for the program and share the Live Green CIP infrastructure including established application guidelines and eligibility criteria. The infrastructure also includes promotion at Live Green events and on the website, joint information sessions with potential applicants, and overall program administration by the Toronto Environment Office. Toronto Public Health would work with potential grantees throughout the year to facilitate grant submissions. Toronto Public Health would also establish and facilitate a Toxics Reduction Grants Selection Committee to review applications submitted and recommend projects for funding. The Committee would be composed of appropriate City staff and external partners to review applications and recommend grants.

Grants are awarded in the spring and fall each year. This existing infrastructure will enable quick implementation, possibly to enable the first grants as early as November 2010, which is the next Live Green CIP granting period.

The Toxics Reduction Grants program will be reviewed annually. The review will include consideration of continuation of the program, if required, to meet the goals and objectives of the ChemTRAC program.

In conclusion, it is recommended that a new toxics reduction grants program be established as a new category in the existing Live Green Community Investment Program (CIP) and authority be given for its administration through the Toronto Environment Office, in collaboration with Toronto Public Health.

CONTACTS

Carol Timmings
Interim Director, Planning and Policy
Toronto Public Health
Phone: 416-338-8402
Fax: 416-392-0713
Email: ctimming@toronto.ca

Nancy Ruscica
Manager, Partnerships & Innovations
Toronto Environment Office
Phone: 416-392-2984
Fax: 416-338-0808
Email: nruscic@toronto.ca

SIGNATURES

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health

Lawson Oates
Director, Toronto Environment Office