

NS Municipalities Looking for Ways to Address Costs and Environmental Impacts of Street Lighting

For Immediate Release

Halifax, NS, September 24th, 2007 – Nova Scotia's municipalities are hoping to shed some light on ways to cut costs and help the environment.

A new study, announced today by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), will examine energy efficient street lighting practices and technology. The study is funded by Conserve Nova Scotia, Halifax Regional Municipality, Nova Scotia Power, and the UNSM.

Street lights are a significant expenditure and a major source of greenhouse gas emissions for municipalities across the province. Minister of Energy and responsible for Conserve Nova Scotia, Bill Dooks, says the study will help municipalities effectively plan for street lighting requirements. "This study will help municipal governments establish standards for street lighting, save money, and cut emissions."

The town of Springhill is one municipality grappling with the issue. John Kelly, Director of Engineering and Public Works for Springhill says at least 35% of Springhill's total energy budget is due to street lighting costs. "We're concerned that so many of our tax dollars go towards this one component of our operations," said Mr. Kelly. "Plus, we estimate the energy use of our street lights contribute to several hundred tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions every year. We are looking to find ways to reduce both the costs and the resulting greenhouse gas emissions of street lights."

In HRM, the figures are staggering – over \$4 million dollars per year and over 20,000 tonnes of CO₂ annually. "Better practices that can effectively and efficiently light our streets and roads, with less environmental impact, fits well with our Climate SMART program to address climate change, and our commitment to being a healthy, sustainable and vibrant municipality," said Mayor Peter Kelly.

The issue is not unique to Nova Scotia's towns and cities. "In some of our smaller, rural municipalities, street lighting represents the single largest energy expense – over 75% in some cases," said Russell Walker, president of the UNSM. "We felt it was important to provide options for all of our municipalities related to this topic. We are hearing how municipalities across Canada are starting to switch to more efficient street-lighting technologies, or are reducing wattages of lights to conserve energy, or are using dimming controls. We want to see what might work here."

There are approximately 135,000 street lights in NS owned by Nova Scotia Power, and HRM owns an additional 13,000 of their own street lights. "We all care about conservation and energy efficiency, so it's important to examine every opportunity," says Alan Richardson, general manager of customer service for Nova Scotia Power. "That includes everything from new technology to how we deliver basic services like street lighting."

The *Smart Street Lighting Strategies* project will include a review of street-lighting standards, current technologies, and common practices in use across the province,

and efficient best practices, industry standards and technologies in other jurisdictions. Some of the key issues that may accelerate or impede the adoption of efficient street-lighting practices, standards and technologies in NS will also be identified. The report is expected in November.

The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) is a not-for-profit organization mandated to represent the Provincial interests of municipal governments across Nova Scotia (NS). UNSM's total membership is 440 elected officials representing all 55 municipalities.

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