

REAPS



REPORT

Hotline 250-561-7327

Website www.reaps.org

Email newsletter@reaps.org

May 2009

COMING EVENTS

MAY

- 3-9 Drinking Water Week
- 11-17 Bike to Work Week
- 23 REAPS Plant Sale 10am-2pm
- 24 DDBGS Plant Sale 10am-2pm
- 31 Environment Week begins

JUNE

- 1-6 Environment Week
- 3 Clean Air Day
- 6 Community Gardens (Milburn St.)
Plant Sale 10am-2pm

JULY

- 1 Canada Day Celebrations

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Recycled Garbage Cans - A Gardener's Dream

REAPS was successful in receiving a \$1000 HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) grant to convert the burned, broken, chewed, run over and generally beat up City Garbage Cans returned from residents into a growing medium for seniors.

In a partnership with the City of Prince George the mangled cans are given to REAPS to create a "new" use for them. Councillor Bassermann with his "green" inspiration and the labour force behind the REAPS project has assisted in creating 35 raised beds for seniors to reap the benefits of comfortable gardening. Cutting the cans to just above waist height, provides seniors with a comfortable platform in which to plant, weed, tend and harvest their produce this growing season. The cans are bolted together in a 2x3 configuration creating a

"raised bed". The height is also adjusted to provide comfortable level for seniors in wheelchairs. Other creations from the can are: backyard composters to accompany the raised beds, cold frames and occasional garden cart.

A big thank you to the City of Prince George and Councillor Bassermann for assisting with another community project!



Tips For Spring Gardening & Using Compost

Adapted from: www.planetnatural.com/site/gardening_tips.html

Ideally, apply compost to your garden about two to four weeks before planting, giving the compost time to integrate and stabilize within the soil.

When planting trees, don't put too much organic matter in the hole they're going in. If the hole is filled with rich organic matter and compost but the surrounding soil is hard and compact or less nutritious, the roots are less likely to spread out into the soil. When the tree isn't anchored well by large roots, it is more likely to be blown over and be less healthy and less able to resist drought.

When transplanting a flower or vegetable, always throw a handful of finished compost in the bottom of the hole. The compost gives the transplant a bit of an extra boost that lasts throughout the season.



When planting in clay soil, cover seeds with vermiculite instead of clay. Clay absorbs heat and may bake the seeds and stop germination. Clay also forms a top crust, preventing water from reaching young seedlings.

REAPS Plant Sale

Saturday May 23, 10am to 2pm

REAPS NEWS

Web Pick of the Month

www.corporateknights.ca - The Canadian Magazine for Responsible Business

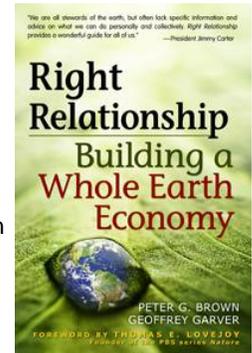
Corporate Knights Inc. is an independent Canadian-based media company with a focus on corporate responsibility. Their mission is to humanize the marketplace by: making it easier for people to know the environmental and social impacts of their marketplace decisions; showcasing the leaders and innovators; and bringing together key decision makers from all sectors to identify common sense solutions that make the market work better for the environment, society and economy. Articles from their magazine can be accessed for free via their website.

Book of the Month

Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy

ISBN: 9781576757628

Drawing on the Quaker idea of "right relationship", Peter G. Brown outlines a vision for an economy based on sound ecological principles. What is right relationship? A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, resilience, and beauty of the commonwealth of life. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.



REAPS Annual Plant Sale

REAPS will be holding our annual plant sale fundraiser on Saturday May 23, 2009, from 10am to 2pm at the Compost Demonstration Garden 1950 Gorse Street.

Featuring: perennials, annuals, herbs, shrubs and vegetables.

Donation of plants - WELCOMED. We will pick or dig up.

Volunteers prior to plant sale to assist with labeling and potting appreciated.

Call 250-561-7327 or email events@reaps.org



2009 Board Elected

REAPS' 2009 AGM was held on March 7th, at which time the board of directors was elected for the next year. The board members are:

James Spankie - President
 Paul Sanborn - Vice President
 Monica Fraser - Secretary
 Linda Kupp - Treasurer
 Val Stewart - Director
 Nicole Botten - Director
 Ted Hayes - Director
 Jeffrey Ollis - Director
 Elizabeth Maclsaac - Director
 Brodie Guy - Director

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Contributions from volunteers are fundamental to every community. Exciting opportunities are available with REAPS; join others in promoting the 3Rs & providing Environmental Education in our community.

WRITERS - If you think you have something to contribute to this newsletter, your words would be *greatly* appreciated.

GARDEN HELPERS - Volunteers are always welcome to help out at the Compost Demonstration Garden located next to Fort George Park.

OTHER - If there is anything else you think you could help out with, please give us a call to discuss your ideas.

Interested in one of the above? Contact Terri at 561-7327 or e-mail volunteer@reaps.org.

Tessa Couldwell wins REAPS Award at Central Interior Science Exhibition

In early March, Prince George hosted the Central Interior Science Exhibition. The best science fair projects from elementary and secondary students across north-central British Columbia were put on display at UNBC.

Only three of the many projects were selected to continue on to the Canadawide Science Fair in Winnipeg, but numerous students received medals and other awards.

REAPS sponsored one award, with a plaque and \$50 cash prize going to Tessa Couldwell from St. Anne's Catholic School in Quensel, BC. Tessa's project, entitled "The Pellet Project" was determined to be the best in the Recycling Category.



LOCAL NEWS

Bike to Work Week

Source: Bike to Work Week Team Leader Package

The Bike to Work Week is a week long challenge that encourages and supports commuter cycling. This year will be the first for Prince George.

The timing for the event could not be more perfect, given the work being done in the City to plan new and better cycling infrastructure, the demand for alternative transportation, and the growth in the number of cyclists in Prince George.

We have many events planned throughout the week to make it fun, visible, and successful for everyone - from cycling pros to brand new riders!

During the week of May 11th, we invite all

businesses and their employees to challenge themselves and "Bike to Work" - participation is FREE.

Business teams can track the team members who bike to work, and prizes are awarded to teams with high participation rates. Participants may bike all the way to and from work, to or from work, or part of the way!



As part of the event, Prince George Transit is offering a free ride to cyclists registered for Bike to Work Week – just in case you don't feel ready to pedal all the way up to the top of the Hart!

Register your team online at www.biketowork.ca/princegeorge

The GREEN CHAIN - nothing is ever clear cut!

PRESENTED BY: THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY

Wednesday, April 29, 2009 - 7:00pm - 9:00pm

CNC Theatre - Room 1-306 3330 - 22nd Avenue, Prince George, BC

The Canadian Institute of Forestry - Cariboo Section is very pleased to present the latest film event by Writer, Director and Producer - Mark Leiren Young: The Green Chain - nothing is ever clear cut!

The battle between loggers and environmentalists is defining, dividing and destroying communities in Canada and around the world. The Green Chain is a powerful, funny and thought-provoking film about the conflicts between people on both sides of the battle who love trees -- and are willing to risk anything to protect their personal visions of the forest.

Tickets are \$10.00 Available from Books & Co. 1685 - 3rd Avenue, Prince George, BC

For more information contact: Tana Woodward 250-970-0015 tana@virtualofficeservices.ca



Rainbarrel - Conserving Water

Conserving water—improving the efficiency of its use—is one important way to address local water needs and ensure adequate supplies in the future. Finding other sources of water can complement conservation. Rainwater is one source, and systems designed to catch and store rainwater take many forms. Rain barrels are one rainwater storage option. Available at REAPS for \$65.00 (cash or cheque). To receive yours today call 250-561-7327 or email events@reaps.org



AROUND BC

BC Ranked as Greenest Province

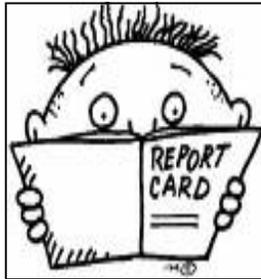
Source: compiled from www.corporateknights.ca/special-reports/83-green-provincial-report/361-green-provinces-2009.html

Released on Earth Day, the Green Provincial Report 2009 ranks BC as the greenest province in Canada, with a grade of C+ (69%). The report was put together by Corporate Knights, and independent Canadian-based media company with a mission "to humanize the marketplace".

In line with their goal to "jumpstart Canada to become the world leader in responsible commerce", Corporate Knights ranked our provinces and territories on the following ten key criteria: air, water, biodiversity, people, buildings, transport, food, waste, energy, and toxics.

British Columbia's highest score was a 10 (out of 10) in the area of food. This is based on the ratio of family farms to large commercial farms (8.83) and the percentage of organic food consumed (0.92%) and produced (2.29%).

BC also did well in the energy category, for good performance in terms of energy consumption intensity, energy efficiency and proportion of green to brown energy.



BC's lowest score, a 3.9, was in the toxics category. This score was based on "toxicity intensity" for air, water and land. Also of concern is our grade for biodiversity: although we have the second-highest percentage of protected land (17.5%), only 4% of our managed forests are FSC-certified, giving us a score of 5.9.

While Nova Scotia scored an overall D (53%), they earned the only other 10/10, in the waste category. This is a direct result of the emphasis that the province has put on waste reduction and building a waste resource economy since 1995, including widespread organics bans and full curbside recycling. Nova Scotia currently recycles about 68% of their waste, and produces 430kg of waste per capita per year.

In comparison, BC produces 675kg per capita and recycles about 47%, earning a score of 7.8. The lowest score in the waste category, a 2.3, was earned by our neighbours in Alberta, as they produce 1133kg of waste per capita and recycle only 17%.

BC's Endangered Rivers List Released

Source: Outdoor Recreation Council of BC News Release (www.orcbc.ca/pro_endangered.htm)

The Outdoor Recreation Council of BC has released their 17th annual "most endangered rivers" list. The list has, in the recent past, had significant impacts on major land and water use plans. By profiling rivers at high risk, the ORCBC has contributed to the awareness and conservation of some of our most important waterways.

For the 16th time, the Fraser River has made it to the top half of the list, particularly for the stretch from Hope to Mission. This area, dubbed as "the heart of the Fraser," houses 30 species of fish (including Canada's largest population of white sturgeon), and has the biggest single spawning run of salmon in the province. Other inherent values include recreational opportunities and cultural sites. Threats to the river are mainly from development and pollution from agricultural, industrial and residential sources.

The Skeena River was mentioned as a river to watch in the year ahead, due to impacts of fish farms and the need for a more selective fishery.

The following list summarizes the top twelve most endangered rivers in BC, including a brief summary of the reasons for each river's inclusion in the list.

1. Flathead River (proposed coal mine, coalbed methane development)
2. Kettle River (water extraction, development, power project proposal)
3. Glacier/Howser Creeks (power project proposal)
4. Fraser River (urbanization, industrial development, pollution)
5. Brohm River (new development, excessive water extraction)
6. Peace River (hydro-electric dam proposal)
7. Coquitlam River (excessive sedimentation, urbanization)
8. Bute Inlet rivers and streams (massive multi-river power project proposal)
9. Coldwater River and other Thompson River Plateau streams (water extraction, development)
10. Klinaklini River (power project proposal)
11. Somass River (prone to drought and low flows)
12. Elk River (development, increasing selenium levels, wildlife migration issues)



AROUND BC

Vancouver Bans Bottled Water on City Property

Source: CBC News, April 23, 2009 (www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/04/23/bc-vancouver-bottled-water.html)

Vancouver city council voted Thursday to immediately eliminate bottled water for staff and council functions and eventually take it out of city concession stands.



The bottles will be phased out of all municipal facilities over the next few years. The move is meant to reduce environmental costs, cut solid waste and battle greenhouse-gas emissions.

"It's really important that we have people move over to tap water, which is the best water you can get," Coun.

Tim Stevenson said Thursday night.

"It's not necessary to use bottled water, and we're trying to find alternatives for people and that, of course, will include other kinds of containers."

City staff will look at ways to increase access to tap water on city properties and to increase the number of water fountains in Vancouver.

Vancouver Coun. Tim Stevenson says council's decision paves the way to gradually eliminating bottled water from city property. (CBC)

Council also recommended the Vancouver Park Board and the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) follow suit and stop sales of bottled water.

The PNE, organizer of Vancouver's popular summer fair, is opposing the recommendation, saying it would lose about \$450,000 in annual sales revenue if it were to stop selling bottled

water.

Refreshments Canada, which represents beverage manufacturers, distributors, franchise houses and industry suppliers, said banning bottled water won't necessarily reduce environmental costs.

"We'll have very little impact on the city's overall environmental footprint," said Justin Sherwood, president of Refreshments Canada.

Some Vancouverites said Thursday they welcomed council's decision.

"People can reduce the amount of water bottles they use by just reusing the water bottles that they have," Jenna Gill said.

An estimated seven million plastic water bottles end up in Vancouver's landfill every year. (CBC)

Harmful Chemicals Found in Water Near Cache Creek Landfill

Source: CBC News, March 20, 2009 (www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/03/20/bc-chemicals-water-arsenic.html)

Three wells currently in use near the Cache Creek landfill in the south central interior of B.C. contain higher than normal levels of chemicals, a study has found.

According to the Health Canada-funded study, chemicals such as arsenic could be leaking from the Cache Creek landfill into groundwater and a nearby river.

The landfill is owned by Metro Vancouver and is the site where up to half a million tons of garbage from the Lower Mainland is dumped each year.

The study was carried out by EcoGen, a North Vancouver company specializing in environmental contamination, on behalf of a First Nations group in the area. It was initially intended to obtain baseline data in case there were problems in the future.

"We had no idea when we started this study that we would actually be finding a significant problem," said Michael Easton, president of EcoGen.

EcoGen tested nine groundwater sites and seven locations on the Bonaparte River, where Cache Creek is located, and found arsenic and selenium at levels higher than B.C. drinking water standards allow.

Representatives at Wastech, the company that runs the landfill, said they have not seen the report yet, but contends it does regular groundwater testing and there has never been a problem with leaching chemicals.

Easton said one of the ways to detect that a landfill is leaking is to test for chemicals such as Poly-brominated dimethyl ethers, or PBDEs, which are common in products like computers

and upholstery but not in nature.

"We know that they are becoming the new worst contaminant in our environment and they are very, very prevalent in landfills," said Easton.

He said those chemicals were found six kilometres from the Cache Creek landfill and just two kilometres from the main water supply of the Ashcroft Indian Band.

Further Reading:
www.bclocalnews.com/surrey_area/surreyleader/news/Toxins_flow_from_Cache_Creek_landfill_trash_study.html



AROUND CANADA

Ontario Protects Health and the Environment Through Pesticide Ban

Source: David Suzuki Foundation Press Release (www.davidsuzuki.org/latestnews/dsfnews03040901.asp)

March 4, 2009 OTTAWA – Ontario has set a new standard for protecting citizens and the environment against harmful lawn and garden pesticides. Hundreds of toxic chemicals will be pulled off store shelves by this spring thanks to regulations announced today under the Cosmetic Pesticide Act.

“We congratulate the Ontario government for raising the bar on protecting people and the environment from needless pesticide exposure,” says Dr. David Suzuki, co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. “Ontario should be commended for putting the health and opinions of its citizen first and resisting the powerful lobbying of chemical companies. I hope this action will stimulate a discussion about the role of chemicals from all sources in our lives.”

Ontario’s new regulations surpass exist-

ing restrictions on pesticides in Quebec – the only other province that bans lawn chemicals.



Today’s announcement will pull more than 250 toxic pesticides off store shelves by the end of April. The Cosmetic Pesticide Act was originally passed last June and recognizes that the ‘cosmetic’ use of pesticides to improve the appearance of lawns and gardens presents health and environmental risks. Today’s announcement specifies exactly which pesticides will be pulled from store shelves and when the ban will take effect.

“Now that the details of Ontario’s ban have been finalized, the province needs to follow through with a comprehensive public education campaign,” says Lisa Gue, environmental health policy analyst for the David Suzuki Foundation. “The government also needs to put in place a robust and effective enforcement program to ensure its success.”

There are areas for improvement in the legislation. For instance, golf courses are exempt from the ban and sale restrictions on certain products will not take effect for two years.

The Suzuki Foundation challenges other provinces to “meet or beat” Ontario’s ban on cosmetic pesticides to ensure a high standard of protection for human health and the environment across the country.

Proposed Ban on Toxic Flame Retardant in Electronics

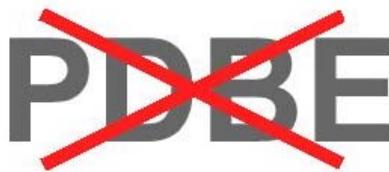
Source: Environmental Defence Press Release, March 27, 2009 (www.environmentaldefence.ca/pressroom/viewnews.php?id=554)

Toronto – Canada’s move to follow the European Union in phasing out highly toxic chemicals used as flame retardants in electronics is a positive step toward protecting public health, according to several environmental groups.

“This revised plan for Canada is great news,” said Lisa Gue, environmental health policy analyst with the David Suzuki Foundation. “For over two years, we have called on the federal government to follow the lead of Europe and other jurisdictions to ban all forms of PBDEs,” she said.

The Government of Canada is proposing to restrict the use, import, and sale of electronics containing the dangerous flame retardant DecaBDE. This chemical is a part of a family of polybrominated flame retardants (PBDEs) that are known to build up in the food chain and that are highly toxic to humans. They have links to cancer and effects on the developing brain, immune, reproductive, and hormonal systems.

“Since 80 per cent of DecaBDE is used in electronics and electrical equipment, this measure is a significant step forward in terms of protecting Canadians from the many effects PBDEs,” said scientist Elaine MacDonald from Ecojustice (formerly Sierra Legal Defence Fund). DecaBDE is used to a lesser extent in textiles such as carpet and furniture.



Canada declared PBDEs as ‘toxic’ in 2006. However, the associated regulations at that time only addressed obsolete forms of the chemical. A number of nongovernmental organizations formally objected to the fact that the regulations would still allow the use of DecaBDE, the only remaining PBDE mixture still widely used in manufacturing worldwide.

Kathleen Cooper, senior researcher with the Canadian Environmental Law Association, notes that “The legacy of these toxic chemicals will remain in our homes and the scientific evidence justifies a total ban on all PBDE uses.” Widely used as flame retardants in household products, PBDEs are released into the environment through product use and disposal, and via industrial emissions. They have been found in house dust, high-fat foods, human blood, and breast milk, and throughout the Canadian environment, from the Great Lakes to the Arctic, at rates that are significantly increasing over time.

“These measures align our management of PBDEs in Canada with that of other leading jurisdictions. This is a great and very welcomed step-forward, we congratulate the federal government for taking this action,” said Rick Smith, Executive Director for Environmental Defence. “We support this announcement and call for PBDE substitution with proven, safer alternatives.”

AROUND THE WORLD (USA)

EPA to Declare Greenhouse Gases a Threat to Human Health

Source: US EPA Press Release April 17, 2009 (<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/0EF7DF675805295D8525759B00566924>)

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is moving forward with plans to officially declare that six greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulphur hexafluoride) contribute to air pollution and are a threat to public health and welfare.

This "proposed finding" may seem obvious to some, but it is significant because it will allow the EPA to act on the US Supreme Court's 2007 ruling that the Clean Air Act can be used to curb climate change emissions. The findings are consistent with President Obama's call

for a low carbon economy and strong leadership on clean energy and climate legislation.

Before issuing final findings, the EPA must undertake a public comment period.

For more information see: <http://epa.gov/climatechange/ endangerment.html>



Chick Magnates

Source: Monocle Magazine, issue 21 . volume 02 . March 2009, p. 055

To save on food shopping, a growing number of US urbanites have taken up a new hobby: poultry farming. Started as a grass-roots movement to promote homegrown, free-range eggs, the fad has taken off in today's worsening economy. In recent months, dozens of cities across the country have passed or amended local laws to allow residents in built-up neighbourhoods to raise chickens in their backyards—



roosters, however, remain off-limits.

Blogs now provide enthusiasts with tips on which breeds to buy and how best to build a chicken run (in hen-crazed Portland there are organised tours of well-designed coops). Even *Backyard Poultry*, a specialist bi-monthly magazine, is benefiting from the boom, recently upping its print run to 80,000.

California Leads U.S. In Recycling And Waste Reform

Source: California Product Stewardship Council Press Release (www.calpsc.org)

Sacramento, CA (February 27, 2009) - A bill introduced by Assembly member Wesley Chesbro (D-Arcata) aims to reduce waste, litter, and greenhouse gases and create thousands of green jobs. The California Product Stewardship Act, AB 283, would incentivize producers to design products and packaging that are less toxic, more durable, reusable, recyclable and/or biodegradable.

"AB 283 moves California towards a more sustainable environment and economy," said Chesbro, chair of the Assembly's Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee. "Product stewardship will reduce government spending and greenhouse gases, while creating jobs that are desperately needed in our state. This bill will help move California out of its budget crisis and into a 'cradle to cradle' state that takes care of its own."

AB 283 is supported by the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC).

CPSC is an organization of local governments and other partners, formed to support development and implementation of product stewardship, otherwise known as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). EPR is a policy approach that shifts waste management costs from local governments to the producers who make design and marketing decisions. CPSC works collaboratively with other local government stewardship councils such as the Northwest Product Stewardship Council (NWPSC).

"CPSC and NWPSC have developed Framework Principles that address many products at once, rather than the product-by-product legislation that is slow and costly," said Kevin Hendrick, Director of the Del Norte Solid Waste Management Authority. "Framework legislation will streamline the process to include other products over time."

AB 283 uses EPR Framework Principles

that address climate change and the growing waste problem. Even with new recycling programs, California is still generating more waste than ever - 40-million tons annually. In a free market, EPR reduces waste while creating opportunities to grow businesses and jobs in recycling and manufacturing industries.

"EPR policies are working in Canada, Europe, Japan and other countries," said Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director of CPSC. "The primary responsibility should rest with producers because only they make design and packaging decisions. It is far less expensive to design a product and packaging to reduce waste than it is to create expensive end-of-life disposal and recycling systems."



RECYCLING & ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY

Mailing address:
PO Box 444, Prince George, BC V2L 4S6

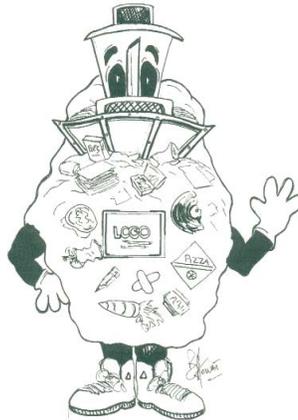
Compost Garden and Office Location:
1950 Gorse Street

Phone: 250-561-7327
Fax: 250-561-7324
E-mail: newsletter@reaps.org
Website: www.reaps.org

Dumpy's Tip of the Month

Although **peat moss** is a natural substance, harvested in Canada, it is not a truly renewable resource. Peat bogs take hundreds or even thousands of years to form.

An alternative way to improve the water retention and drainage of your soil (aside from adding compost, of course) is to use **coconut coir**, the waste-product from coconut husks.



RECYCLE CRAFT CORNER

Garden Markers

Here are two ideas for making recycled garden markers.

The first is made from old mini blinds. Simply cut the slats into lengths about 12 cm long, then trim one end into a point so that it will go into the ground easily. Write the names of your plants on the markers with a permanent marker. You can write extra information on the back side if you wish.



For added character, try using old cutlery to label your garden rows. Thrift stores are a great place to find mismatched utensils. For spoons and knives, you can write directly on the broad surface with a permanent marker. The tines of forks can be bent to hold a thin object, such as a used canning jar lid, which can then be written on.



Recycling and Environmental Action Planning Society (AKA REAPS)

The REAPS Report is published six times a year, on the first of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Articles, originals or reprinted with permission, are submitted by members and represent the opinions of the authors only, not necessarily those of the Society, Board, or members as a whole.

Deadline for submission is two weeks prior to publication date. Articles, suggestions for articles, or comments in general are *much* appreciated, and can be submitted to the REAPS office via email at newsletter@reaps.org

RECYCLING and ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Annual Membership Fee:

- Individual (\$8.00)
 Family (\$15.00)
 Business (\$25.00)
 Student (\$5.00)
 Senior (\$5.00)

I'm interested in volunteering: Yes No

Things that I would like to take part in are:

- School presentations
 Master Composter Program
 Spring Plant Sale
 General Garden Work
 Information Booths
 Fundraiser Events
 Public Workshops and Presentations
 Board of Directors

Date: _____

Cheque payable to:
R.E.A.P.S.

Box 444 Prince George, B.C. V2L 4S6