



News Release

Embargoed until 1:00pm EDT Friday June 17, 2011

Cities receive awards for stormwater management, water conservation and sustainability ***Mayors' organization also releases report on future of stormwater management***

Niagara Falls, ON June 17, 2011 - Cities were recognized today for their work on stormwater management, water conservation and sustainability best practices at the 2011 Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Annual General Meeting. Additionally, the Cities Initiative released its first Green CiTTS (Cities Transforming Towards Sustainability) report on municipal stormwater management, entitled "*Stormwater Management in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin: Cities Charting the Way Forward*".

"Cities Initiative members are demonstrating outstanding leadership in stormwater management, water conservation, and sustainability," said Mayor Brian McMullan of St. Catharines and chair of the Cities Initiative. "I continue to be impressed by the progress cities are making to protect and restore the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River."

As part of its Green CiTTS program, an effort launched in 2010 to promote and advance municipal action toward sustainability, the Cities Initiative recognized three cities for their contribution to stormwater management in the areas of leadership, innovation and progress. The winners are:

1. The City of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District received the *Leadership Award* for an ongoing commitment to addressing stormwater impacts through green infrastructure.
2. The City of Trois Rivières received the *Innovation Award* for a strategy to integrate natural areas with urban development.
3. The City of Montreal received the *Progress Award* for sustainable stormwater management efforts in light of climate change.

Through the Cities Initiative Water Conservation Framework, 33 cities have committed to working towards a 15 percent reduction (below year 2000 water use levels) by the year 2015. Collectively, almost half of the participants have already achieved a 16 percent reduction in water consumption, conserving approximately 106 billion gallons or 401 billion liters of water (enough to fill 161,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools). The City of Toronto received the award for *Most Innovative Water Conservation Method* and the Town of the Blue Mountains received the *Most Progress on Water Conservation Award*.

Also during the conference, the City of Sheboygan received the fifth annual *Wege Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award*. The *Wege Award* is given to a community with a population of less than 100,000 for a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence project that balances economic, social, and environmental aspects and that can be used as a best practice in other communities. Sheboygan received this year's *Wege Award* for their efforts to move the function of their wastewater treatment plant completely off of electric energy from the grid. The plant meets its energy needs by capturing and using methane gas from the treatment process.



During the conference, the Cities Initiative also released the report *“Stormwater Management in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin: Cities Charting the Way Forward”*. The report, based on a comprehensive survey of member city stormwater practices, provides a snapshot of the state of municipal stormwater management in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin, highlighting best practices of its member municipalities and recommending actions to address challenges in stormwater management facing all municipalities, including urban intensification, the impacts of climate change, and worsening water quality.

“Managing stormwater is an enormous challenge for municipalities,” said Mayor Tom Barrett of Milwaukee and the 2011-2012 vice chair of the Cities Initiative. “The Cities Initiative report is the first of its kind, providing information and best practices directly from municipalities on their stormwater practices.”

At the member meeting, Mayor McMullan of St. Catharines was elected the 2011-2012 chair of the Cities Initiative, succeeding Mayor Denis Lapointe of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. Mayor Barrett of Milwaukee is the new vice chair, and Mayor Régis Labeaume of Québec City, president of the Québec Metropolitan Community, is the secretary/treasurer. The 2011 Cities Initiative Annual General Meeting concluded with a presentation and invitation from Mayor Labeaume to the 2012 Cities Initiative Annual General Meeting in Québec City.

“I want to take this opportunity to thank Mayor Lapointe for his leadership over the past year and his continued dedication to the Cities Initiative,” said Mayor Labeaume. “We are particularly grateful to him for his successful efforts in expanding our work and membership in the province of Québec.”

For more information on award winners and the annual general meeting, please visit www.glslcities.org/annual-meetings/2011.cfm. For more on the stormwater report, visit www.glslcities.org/initiatives/greencities/stormwater.cfm.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (www.glslcities.org) is a binational coalition of over 80 mayors and other local officials that works actively with federal, state, tribal, first nation and provincial governments and other stakeholders to advance the protection, restoration and promotion of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin.

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