



Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change

RMCC Letter - April-May 2025 Edition

Welcome to the April-May 2025 edition of the Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change (RMCC) newsletter. This edition highlights our successful Earth Week activities, recognition from the City of Richmond Hill, collaborative projects, and upcoming environmental initiatives.

1. News and Recognition

Certificate of Appreciation from Mayor David West

We are proud to announce that the Rotary Club of Richmond Hill received a Certificate of Appreciation from Mayor David West and the City of Richmond Hill for our participation in the 2025 Clean Up, Green Up Weeks. The certificate acknowledges our hard work and care for the environment, recognizing how our efforts have helped make our community greener. This recognition reflects our ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and community service.



Mini Forest Project Partnership Success

RMCC is excited to announce our participation in a collaborative mini forest project with the Rotary Club of Uxbridge and eight other partnering Rotary clubs. The District Grant application for this environmental initiative at the Fields of Uxbridge has been approved with total project funding of \$14,900, including:

- **Nine Rotary Clubs contributing \$4,950** (including RC Richmond Hill - \$200)
- **1:1 District Grant match of \$4,950**
- **Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Grant of \$5,000**

The site preparation is scheduled for Saturday, July 5, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, involving laying 200 square meters of cardboard, 25 yards of compost, and 30 yards of mulch.

The actual tree planting will take place in fall 2025. This project demonstrates the power of inter-club collaboration in addressing environmental challenges.

2. Earth Week Activities Report (April 22-27, 2025)

Richmond Hill Rotary Park Cleanup - April 22, 2025

Our Earth Week activities began with the annual Richmond Hill Rotary Park cleanup on Earth Day, April 22, 2025, at 5:00 PM. The event saw excellent participation from our club



members, joined by Rotarians from York and Danforth Clubs, as well as Richmond Hill residents. Participants worked in teams of two with bags and gloves provided by the City of Richmond Hill. The sunny weather contributed to great fellowship throughout the cleanup activity. The event concluded with a fellowship dinner at Markham Station Restaurant, where additional Rotarians joined to celebrate Earth Day.

District Environmental Symposium - April 24, 2025

On April 24, 2025, chairman of the District Environmental Action Committee organized a virtual Symposium on Plastic Pollution. A good number of RMCC members joined the event. There were two speakers, Dr Chelsea Rochman from University of Toronto and Karen Wisrig from Environmental Defence Advisory Group. Speakers eloquently defined the problems of micro and macro plastic in our lives. They stated that the more they talk about the plastic problem the more people get scared.

Speakers from problem solving professions and organizations, to describe the processes and tools for mitigating the problem, were absent. Furthermore, there were no speakers representative of Governments to clearly hear the problem as defined and demonstrate the existing solutions and future plans to remedy the problem.

David Dunlap Observatory Event - April 27, 2025

The Environment Committee participated in the City of Richmond Hill's Clean Up Green Up program by setting up an information tent at the David Dunlop Observatory from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The event was well-attended, with visits from members of our sister clubs Woodbridge and York, who also helped provide information to visitors. A highlight was meeting a Rotarian from Brazil who was visiting his son, a Richmond Hill resident, allowing for an international exchange of ideas about club activities.



The tent was also visited by Mayor David West, Deputy Mayor Godwin, and City Councillors. Deputy Mayor Godwin provided an extensive report on the Observatory's history and its designation as a heritage building. The beautiful spring weather made it an ideal day for outdoor environmental education activities.



3. Climate Change Facts

Plastic Pollution: A Growing Environmental Crisis

The plastic pollution crisis continues to escalate globally, with significant implications for climate change. Every day, the equivalent of 2,000 garbage trucks full of plastic are dumped into the world's oceans, rivers, and lakes, with approximately 11 million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean every year according to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).



Source: Adobe Stock photos

The climate impact is staggering: plastics generated 1.8 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in 2019 – representing 3.4 per cent of the world's total emissions. This figure is projected to grow substantially as plastic production is expected to triple by 2060. With 98 per cent of single-use plastics made from petrochemicals derived from oil and gas, the entire lifecycle from extraction to disposal creates carbon emissions driving global warming. Petrochemicals are expected to account for more than a third of global oil demand growth to 2030, and nearly half the growth to 2050, making plastic reduction crucial for climate action.

<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/plastics>

Global Temperature Trends Continue

Recent data confirms that global warming trends persist, with climate scientists monitoring various indicators including Arctic ice coverage, ocean temperatures, and extreme weather patterns. These ongoing changes underscore the urgency of our environmental mission and the importance of continued Rotarian action on climate issues.

The Connection Between Local and Global Action

Our Earth Week activities demonstrate how local environmental action contributes to broader climate change mitigation efforts. Community cleanups help prevent plastic waste from entering waterways, environmental education raises awareness about consumption patterns, and reforestation projects like our mini forest initiative create carbon sinks while raising awareness about larger environmental challenges.

4. Upcoming Events

World Environment Day - June 7, 2025

RMCC will participate in the World Environment Day Celebrations in Toronto on Saturday, June 7, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Christie Pits Park. The theme for 2025 is #BeatPlasticPollution, aligning perfectly with our recent symposium focus. The event will feature live music, kids' zones, food vendors, eco pop-ups, and tree giveaways. We encourage all members and their families to join us. Public transit via Bloor Subway to Christie Station is recommended due to limited parking in Toronto.



Rotary International Conference - Calgary, June 21-25, 2025

RMCC representatives will attend the Rotary International Conference in Calgary to network with Rotarians sharing our environmental concerns and to advocate for stronger climate action within Rotary International. Our mission is to create awareness and motivate Rotarians globally to take serious action on climate change, with the goal of convincing Rotary International to put climate change more prominently on its agenda.

As noted in our preparation materials: "Laws of nature and data clearly indicate Climate Change. Floods and droughts continue around the world, glaciers continue to melt and unfortunately politicians pay less attention to the problems. Rotary International needs to take a serious stand on the problem."

Mini Forest Site Preparation - July 5, 2025

Join us for the site preparation phase of our collaborative mini forest project in Uxbridge from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. This hands-on environmental project offers an excellent opportunity for inter-club fellowship while making a direct contribution to reforestation efforts.

5. Acknowledgments

We extend our gratitude to the City of Richmond Hill staff, particularly Danielle Bahri for organizing successful Earth Week events and including our club in the Clean Up Green Up program. Special thanks to Myles O'Brien for assistance with tent setup and to the Waste Management Department for providing cleanup supplies.

We also appreciate the support of our sister Rotary Clubs and RMCC members who participated in our Earth Week activities, demonstrating the collaborative spirit that makes our environmental initiatives successful.

RMCC (Rotarians Mitigating Climate Change) is a group of dedicated Rotarians working together to combat climate change. We collaborate with community leaders, raise public awareness, and implement effective strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainability.

Join us in our mission to create a greener, more resilient future. Together, we can drive significant, lasting change and build a better world for generations to come.

For any questions or inquiries, please contact:

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