

Students take the lead

UBCYCLES TO THE RESCUE

Want to help the environment and get in shape by cycling to class but don't have a bicycle?

UBCycles, formerly known as UniCycles, is a program where staff, faculty and students at the University's of British Columbia's Okanagan campus can sign out a bike to get to and from campus.

Meshkat Javid is the UBCycles coordinator and an avid cyclist.

"First and foremost we want to provide services for cycling at the university and to try and facilitate alternate ways to get to the campus," says Javid. "It's just a matter of sustainability. Every September the parking lots are pretty full and access to busses is an ongoing issue. It's just better to jump on a bike and ride to school. We want to make cycling to the university a viable option."

Chelsea Butchart, Campus Life student event coordinator, says the program is a popular one.

It is not uncommon for all of the bikes that were donated to the program by the public, to be signed out.

"I was impressed to see the student's response and how many volunteers there were," says Butchart, adding the plan is to start the program up again in September when students are returning to class for another year of study.

Butchart says students will also be shown the safest route to the campus as well as offering tips for cycling around Kelowna.

UBCycles organizers also have plans to expand on the city's Bike to Work Week, with a Bike to School Week event.

The main goal of the program is to get more people out of their cars and using pedal power to get to the campus.

Those wanting a bike must provide some basic information before they can ride away fully kitted with the bike, a helmet, light, small repair kit, tire pump and a lock.



The best part is it is all free. The bikes have been donated to UBCycles from members of the community and there is no charge to those signing out a bike.

Javid says people can also bring their bikes to UBCycles, located in the UNC, and repair them. It is just another incentive to get people to pedal to school. ●

TURNING OUT THE LIGHTS TO WIN



Turn out the lights and win one for the home team - or more accurately, the home dorm.

The Energy Cup was born out of Save the World Week and is a student-driven competition to see which residential housing complex can reduce their consumption of energy the most.

Chelsea Butchart, student events coordinator with Campus Life, says the Energy Cup is a way to

get students actively involved and thinking about ways to reduce everyday energy consumption.

Monthly competitions are held to see which building can claim the biggest reduction in the use of electricity and natural gas with an overall winner being named at the end of the term.

With the support of the Okanagan Sustainability Office, the official competition started in January and Butchart would like to see the Energy Cup become an annual event.

The residential advisors host a variety of events to promote power-saving ideas and to keep track of the energy being used.

At the end of the year, the winning residence will get a pizza party, a small trophy and, of course, bragging rights.

"The goal is to reduce energy use and to provide information to the students on how to reduce energy use," says Butchart. "Since the competition started, energy use has been decreasing." ●