



Power of You volunteers Cara Kirkey (L) and Jacquetta Benard (R), and the Sustainability Office's JoAnn Rennick Brown

Show and tell. And walk.

WALKING TOURS DEMONSTRATE ECO COMMITMENT

What began as a question-and-answer exercise for curious visitors has evolved into a showcase of green facilities and features reflecting sustainable environmental, economic, and socially responsible values on UBC's Okanagan campus.

The Okanagan Sustainability Office at UBC's Okanagan campus put substance around the abundance of informal requests streaming in from the public, government officials, other institutions, engineering, and building professionals about eco-building initiatives. Many wanted to see sustainability up close, as the campus completed a \$400-million build out, and the student population grew to 8,300 students from 3,500 students in 2005.

"There were so many leading-edge features and green highlights that we put together a Sustainability Walking Tour," says JoAnn Rennick Brown of the Sustainability Office. "We wanted to develop a program to respond to the opportunity to share and communicate our collective achievements."

Among the more recent "what's that?" features of the sustainability tour are pine beetle traps set up in strategic locations across campus to capture the grain-of-rice-size bugs that are devastating pine forests across BC and Alberta. While the pine beetle traps started as a research experiment using pheromone to capture beetles in 2008, the traps have been implemented into a best practice by Facilities Management to protect the campus' bountiful pine trees.

To date, more than 250 people, including government officials and international student groups, have taken the Sustainability Walking Tour, guided by Sustainability Office staff. Walking tour brochures are also available for self-guided tours.

Facilities Management has played a key role in expanding the walking tours by providing subject matter experts and independent geo-exchange and composting tours.

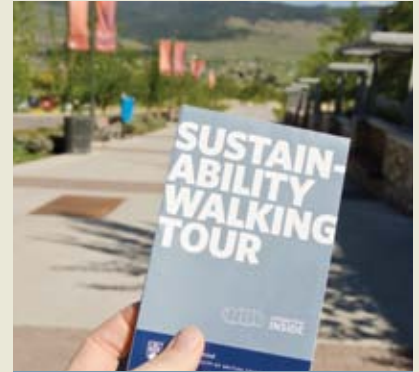
More recently, increased sustainability enquiries from potential and registered students have led UBC Student Ambassadors to approach the Sustainability Office asking for sustainability training. Student Ambassadors can now point out campus green features on their guided tours. Community members who have taken the tour have expressed the benefits in bringing UBC's sustainability features to life.

Michael Ross, a teacher and athletics coach at Okanagan Mission Secondary School, has brought two of his classes to campus to participate in the Sustainability Walking Tours. The tours gave the students an opportunity to learn more about the sustainability initiatives on campus with the aim of starting a similar composting program at his school.

"The tour gave high-school students tangible experience on how to compost, measure energy use in buildings using renewable geothermal energy, and design buildings with more foresight and better performance," says Ross. "Furthermore, they learned about campus life, what it may be like to attend as a student, the campus layout, and services."

Ross was among the first employees at UBC in 2005 and is impressed by the university's commitment and the massive progress made towards sustainability in only seven years. His Okanagan Mission students gained insight and knowledge during their visit to campus, says Ross.

"There is huge value in witnessing a shift in culture," says Ross. "UBC is a thought leader and influences many of our brightest minds. Demonstrating a new way of living that is more sustainable is critical to changing our culture." ●



Many features are not readily apparent, so the Okanagan Sustainability Office designed a brochure for the campus Sustainability Walking Tour. It maps and summarizes points of interest. Green highlights of the Sustainability Walking Tour include:

- Geo-thermal heating and cooling in all new buildings, with legacy buildings outfitted with geo-thermal heating;
- Composting station and compost bins in every building;
- 'Waterfillz' kiosks that supply filtered, cooled drinking water to cut down on plastic bottle waste;
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building ratings;
- Green Globes building guidance and assessment programs;
- Solar panels on Purcell and Nicola student residences for domestic hot water preheating;
- Living green roofs on the Engineering, Management and Education Building, Reichwald Health Sciences Centre, and Purcell residences;
- Low-flow bathroom fixtures;
- Storm water retention pond;
- High-efficiency windows;
- Use of local materials.