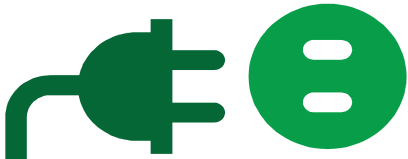


Promising Practices



Businesses

Westin Ottawa works to reduce its carbon footprint

When one is asked to provide an example of an environmentally friendly or energy efficient business, a hotel is usually not the first place that springs to mind. Whether it's the continual washing of once used sheets and towels, or the individually wrapped soaps and lotions, the hotel industry seems to be an incredibly consumptive one, at first glance. However, the Westin Ottawa is proof that this need not always be the case.



The Westin Ottawa hotel has implemented a number of responsible, environmentally-friendly policies to reduce its carbon footprint.

The Westin Ottawa has implemented a wide range of green initiatives, covering nearly every aspect of its business. In the kitchen and stewarding section, the hotel takes advantage of all recycling and composting programs and donates unused food items to local food banks or shelters. All items are reusable where possible, food is bought locally when available, and the use of Styrofoam products has been banned.¹ These recycling programs and use of reusable items also extends to the banquets department.

The hotel has also gone through retrofits on its boilers for heating. The lighting systems have been upgraded to include a Building Automation System, which ensures lights in meeting rooms, common rooms, and kitchens are on timers which ensure the lights turn off when not in use.²

Besides these general sustainability practices and technology upgrades, the Westin has taken further steps to reduce its environmental impact.

The Make a Green Choice program is an option available to guests who wish to make a positive environmental contribution while staying at the Westin. The hotel offers a \$5 voucher or 500 Starpoints for each night that the guest declines housekeeping. This single night of abstaining from housekeeping can result in an estimated saving of 49.2 gallons of water, 0.19 kWh of electricity, 25,000 BTU's of natural gas, and 7 ounces of chemicals.³

The hotel has also introduced the service of Sustainable Meetings, an initiative intended to make business meetings at the hotel as sustainable as possible. This includes meeting planning (electronic sales tools, e-menus, online capacity charts, personalized event websites), meeting set-ups (energy efficient signage, sustainable meeting supplies, environmentally preferred disposable products), and post-meeting transportation services.⁴

Lastly, the Westin Ottawa Green Committee has the objective to create, improve, and oversee the hotel's eco-friendly practices. One of their priorities is raising awareness through

engagement, both internally and externally. The Committee has created green manuals for each department to act as a resource. In addition, the group has also created an Energy Conservation bulletin board updated with information for hotel associates. Publically, the hotel participates in Earth Hour and Ottawa's Annual Capital Spring Clean-Up.⁵

For its efforts, the Westin has received many recognitions and awards, not only from the Hotel Association of Canada (Energy and Environment Award 2009 and Green Key Eco Rating 4 Award), but also independent organizations (Istaygreen.org – 3 Eco Green Leaves) and Hydro Ottawa (Companies for Conservation Certificate of Recognition).⁶

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Michelle Pham, Director of Rooms
Westin Ottawa
11 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa
Phone: 613.560.7375
Michelle.Pham@westin.com

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www.community-energy.ca



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- ¹ The Westin Ottawa. "Green Initiatives at the Westin Ottawa." Website text. www.thewestinottawa.com/green. Accessed March 2011.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ The Westin Ottawa. "Make a Green Choice." Website text. www.thewestinottawa.com/green-choice. Accessed March 2011.
- ⁴ The Westin Ottawa. "Sustainable Meetings." Website text. www.thewestinottawa.com/sustainablemeetings. Accessed March 2011.
- ⁵ Supra note 1.
- ⁶ Ibid.

