



# ENERGY WIRE

SD43 Sustainability and Energy Management Newsletter

Sustainable energy is essential for combating climate change, ensuring economic growth, and creating a healthier planet.



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## ABOUT US

We work with BC Hydro, Fortis BC and Clean BC, to find ways to make our schools run more efficiently to reduce our carbon footprint. New LED lights at your school? That was us. New efficient heating system? We were there too. Holiday Shut Down competitions, us too, and so much more.

This newsletter is designed to let everyone know about SD43 sustainability initiatives. All through the District, great things are going on to make our students, our community, and our world more sustainable. We want to know what you are doing and how you are doing it.

## MESSAGE FROM THE ENERGY MANAGEMENT TEAM

### Our Vision, Your Voice! 🌍

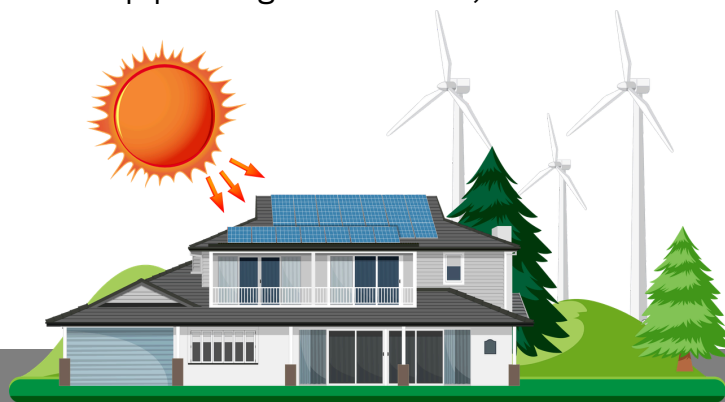
Achieving the goals in our Low Carbon Sustainability Plan isn't something the Energy Team can do alone—it takes the energy and commitment of every student and staff member in District 43.

We invite you to take full advantage of the sustainability activities scheduled this year. Whether it's a district-wide challenge or a small classroom initiative, every bit of participation counts.

**Show us what you've got!** We want to feature your school's hard work in our next update. Share your activities and ideas with us—let's inspire each other to keep pushing for a cleaner, more efficient future.

Let's make this year our most sustainable yet!

Your Energy Team ⚡🌞





# Sweater Day Campaign Winners!

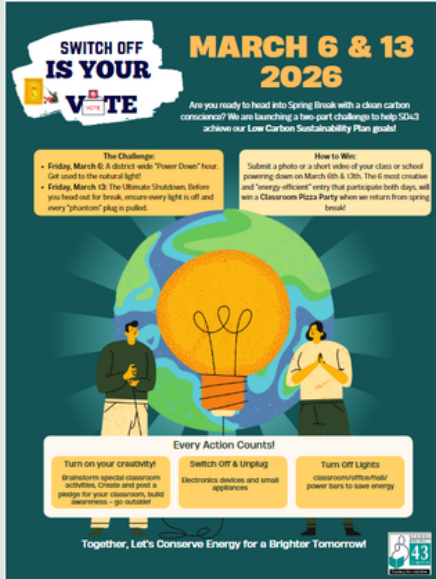
A huge thank you to all the schools that participated our Sweater Day to promote energy conservation!

Special recognition to the 4 winning schools Kilmer, Pitt River, Riverview Park, and Vanier for their efforts. These winning schools have been awarded a tree of their choice which we will plant in March with their students.

Together, we're making a difference—one cozy sweater at time! 🌍💚



## The Friday Fade Out Challenge



Before we break for the Spring Holidays join in our two Friday (March 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>) turn it off challenge

Achieving the goals of our Low Carbon Sustainability Plan isn't just about big machines—it's about our collective energy!

We are inviting every school in the district to participate in a two-part energy challenge this March. Before we head off for Spring Break, let's show how much power we can save.

### 🏆 How to Win:

- **Take a photo or a 15-second video of your classroom** or school completely powered down on March 6th and 13th.
- **Submit & Share:** Send your entries to the Energy Team (apettyfer@sd43.bc.ca).
- **The Reward:** The 6 most creative and energy-efficient classrooms will win a Pizza Party to be delivered when we return from the spring break.

**Let's keep it bright by keeping the lights tight!**

# Eco-Hero Spotlight: Scott Romano & The Vanier Team



## Leading the Charge to Platinum Status

While we all work toward a greener District 43, Scott Romano and his students at the Vanier Center are setting a gold—no, platinum—standard!

Scott has fully engaged his Encompass 10-12 and CLC programs in the EcoSchools Canada challenge. This program turns sustainability into a team sport, where schools earn points for every green initiative they complete. Scott's team isn't just participating; they are on a mission to become a Platinum Rated School.

## Turning Ideas into Action

Scott's impact can be seen all over the Vanier campus. Thanks to his leadership and a successful grant from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the team has been busy:

- **The Pollinator Project:** Creating a meadow and garden to support local biodiversity.
- **Zero-Waste Innovation:** Implementing a composting program featuring a new electronic composter and student-built leaf mold bins.
- **Campus Infrastructure:** Building custom Return-It recycling stations with clear, student-designed signage.
- **Community Connection:** Scott's team has connected to the Coquitlam Park Spark program and will be helping our community maintain the park we all enjoy.



Scott's students aren't just building gardens; they are energy leaders. By participating in National Sweater Day and the Holiday Shut Down, they are proving that small changes in behavior lead to big wins for our Low Carbon Sustainability Plan.

Check out Eco Schools for your own students and we will keep you updated on Vanier's progress to the top throughout the rest of the school year. [EcoSchools Canada](#)

Way to go Scott, you are an inspiration.

If there are any other Eco Schools out there, please let us know, we want to see how you are doing too.

# Get your Garden Ready!



Spring is almost here and we want to invite you to sign up to receive starter plants this season!

Now is the time to start **preparing your garden plots**. Whether you're part of a school garden club or just love to grow, start thinking your **design ideas!**

Is your school on the list to receive starter plants and vegetables? If not or if you are not sure email us at ([apettyfer@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:apettyfer@sd43.bc.ca)) Don't delay, the plants are being ordered.



## EVENTS COMING UP!

### Opportunity: Hands-On Environmental Learning for Your Classroom!

**Available! Hands-On Environmental Learning for K-12 Classrooms - Now at a Reduced Rate!**

The Starfish Canada (formerly Sea Smart) is excited to offer Metro Vancouver schools access to all of our hands-on, curriculum-aligned environmental education programs at a **special reduced rate**, ensuring all students can participate regardless of financial barriers.

**PROGRAM OFFERINGS:**

- CLEAN WATER CHAMPIONS**
  - Learn about freshwater pollution and how it impacts our ocean through engaging presentations and action projects!
  - Grades: K-3
  - Time: 1-2 hours depending on grade
  - Location: We come to your classroom!
- SPECIES AT RISK**
  - Introduce yourself to species at risk along the Pacific Northwest coast and learn how their survival is closely tied to the health of our marine ecosystems.
  - Grades: K-3
  - Time: 1-2 hours depending on grade
  - Location: We come to your classroom!
- SHORELINE STEWARDS**
  - Bring your classroom outside for this hands-on workshop that gets students to explore local shoreline ecosystems while learning how to protect them.
  - Grades: 4-7
  - Time: 1 hour
  - Locations: Various beaches around Metro Vancouver
- OCEAN DESIGN LAB**
  - Participate in an innovative challenge and redesign bottom trawling nets to minimize their environmental impact. Build and test prototypes in a friendly competition!
  - Grades: 4-12
  - Time: 2 hours
  - Locations: We come to your classroom!

**TO BOOK:**  
Email: [teaghan@thestarfish.ca](mailto:teaghan@thestarfish.ca)  
Or sign up using our [booking form](http://www.starfish.ca).  
[www.starfish.ca](http://www.starfish.ca)

**Special Program Price: \$150 per program**  
• \$10 for each additional student over 30  
This program price is ONLY available for programs booked by March 31st, 2026!

The Starfish Canada are offering Metro Vancouver Schools their curriculum-aligned programs at a special reduced rates.

#### Program Highlights:

- **Clean Water Champions (Grades K-3):** Explore freshwater pollution and its impact on our oceans through engaging presentations and action projects.
- **Species at Risk (Grades K-3):** Meet Pacific Northwest species at risk and learn how marine ecosystem health is vital to their survival
- **Ocean Design Lab (Grades 4-7):** An innovative challenge where students redesign bottom trawling nets to minimize environmental impact
- **Shoreline Stewards (Grades 4-12):** An outdoor, hands-on workshop held at local beaches to explore and protect shoreline ecosystems.



To secure this reduced rate, programs must be **booked by March 31st, 2026**.

#### Ready to Book?

**Email:** [teaghan@thestarfish.ca](mailto:teaghan@thestarfish.ca) or [xian@thestarfish.ca](mailto:xian@thestarfish.ca).

**Online:** Use the booking form at [www.starfish.ca](http://www.starfish.ca).

# Looking Ahead: Sustainability Events



In 2026, we plan to put on an activity each month to empower students to take the lead in creating a greener future. We hope you participate by joining us for these fun and impactful events:



## Turn it Off Challenge

During this month, we'll focus on turning off unused lights, devices, and equipment throughout the school to achieve real energy savings.



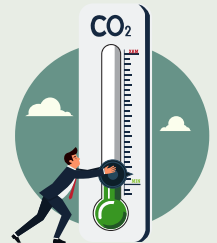
## District-Wide Clothing Swap - (DSL)

Like last year, our District Sustainable leaders will be putting on another district-wide clothing swap on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Pinetree Community Center. Start collecting your clothing!



## Earth Day Week Eco Challenge April 20 - 23

Celebrate Earth Day with four days of eco-friendly challenges focused on energy, waste, water, and active transportation.



## Vancouver Landfill Field Trip April 24 Pro-D Day

District Sustainability Club members will visit the Vancouver Landfill to learn firsthand about waste management and the environmental impacts of consumption. Transportation and lunch provided by Metro Vancouver. (Pro D Day)



## Spring Gardens

The Energy Team will provide assorted vegetables, herbs and pollinating flowers to registered schools early May. Start thinking about your design ideas!



## The Waste Wizard Challenge

Our District Sustainable Leadership (DSL) students are creating a refresher course on proper waste sorting. Expect fun games and interactive videos to participate in!



# SWITCH OFF IS YOUR



# MARCH 6 & 13 2026

Are you ready to head into Spring Break with a clean carbon conscience? We are launching a two-part challenge to help SD43 achieve our **Low Carbon Sustainability Plan goals!**

## The Challenge:

- **Friday, March 6:** A district-wide "Power Down" hour. Get used to the natural light!
- **Friday, March 13:** The Ultimate Shutdown. Before you head out for break, ensure every light is off and every "phantom" plug is pulled.

## How to Win:

Submit a photo or a short video of your class or school powering down on March 6th & 13th. The 6 most creative and "energy-efficient" entry that participate both days, will win a **Classroom Pizza Party** when we return from spring break!



## Every Action Counts!

### Turn on your creativity!

Brainstorm special classroom activities, Create and post a pledge for your classroom, build awareness - go outside!

### Switch Off & Unplug

Electronics devices and small appliances

### Turn Off Lights

classroom/office/hall/  
power bars to save energy

Together, Let's Conserve Energy for a Brighter Tomorrow!



# SD43 CLOTHING SWAP

**Start Collecting your swappable clothes NOW!**

**Don't shop—Swap!** Give your pre-loved clothes a second life and find your new favorite outfit for FREE.

**SATURDAY APRIL 18, 2026**

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

**Location:** Pinetree Community Centre  
1260 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam

## Who can participate?

All SD43 families and friends are welcome. Those that donate will gain early entry from 9am - 11am.

## Donation Collection

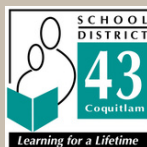
Spring Break is the perfect time to clean out your closet. Participating Secondary schools will be collecting donations from April 7 - 16.

Please ensure all clothes are clean and in good condition.

**No price tags. Just Style**

**Save water and reduce textile waste**

**Keep the fashion cycle moving within our school**



**Organizer:** SD43 District Sustainability Leadership Committee - DSL



## Recognize Your Champions: 2026 Environmental Achievement Awards



Do you know an environmental leader who goes above and beyond to make Coquitlam greener, cleaner, or more sustainable?

Now is the time to celebrate them! We are thrilled to announce the return of the **City of Coquitlam's Environmental Achievement Awards**, a program dedicated to honoring the remarkable efforts of those committed to environmental stewardship.

### Project Inspiration

Nominations can be based on a wide variety of impactful projects, including:

- **Habitat & Wildlife:** Invasive species removal, stream protection, or habitat rehabilitation.
- **Education:** Public outreach and school-based environmental programs.
- **Community Clean-up:** Street, park, or stream clean-ups and storm-drain marking.
- **Climate Action:** Waste reduction, recycling initiatives, and water conservation.

### How to Nominate

The nomination process is quick and easy:

- **Deadline:** Friday, March 13, 2026.
- **Nominate Online:** Visit [coquitlam.ca/EnviroAwards](https://coquitlam.ca/EnviroAwards) to complete the form.

**Questions?** Contact the city at 604-927-3636 or email [EnvironmentalEducation@coquitlam.ca](mailto:EnvironmentalEducation@coquitlam.ca).

**Let's show the city the incredible sustainability work happening across District 43!**



# Teacher Professional Development



## The Great Big Crunch 2026

Looking for fresh ways to connect your students with the local environment?

Join this upcoming virtual session to explore how to integrate marine conservation and hands-on sustainability into your curriculum.



### Event Details:

- **Platform:** Virtual via Zoom
- **Registration:** [Click Here to Register](#)

## Outdoor Leadership: Mentorship in the Wild

How do we move from being "teachers in a classroom" to "mentors in the wild"?

You are invited to a free, one-hour virtual workshop hosted by the Outdoor Learning School & Store to explore the art of leading youth in the great outdoors.



### Event Details:

**Date:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026

**Time:** 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Pacific Time

**Format:** Virtual Zoom Workshop (Recording available for all registrants!) - [Click Here](#)

## Virtual Workshop - Outdoor Learning Books & Resources

This free virtual workshop is a unique chance to connect with the authors and creators behind some of Canada's most beloved outdoor and Indigenous learning resources.

### Event Details:

**Date:** Tuesday, March 10, 2026

**Time:** 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Pacific Time

**To Register:** [Click Here](#)

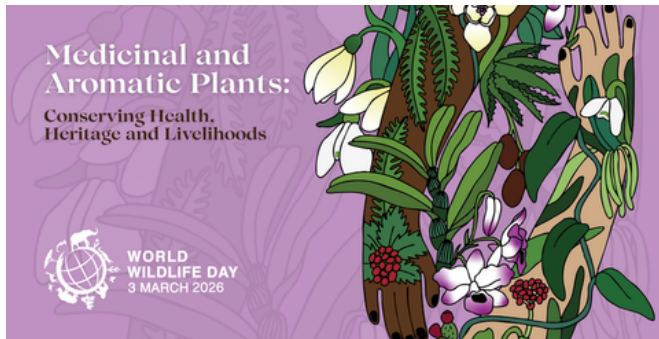


# MARCH - MONTH OF ACTION



Spring Break (March 16–27) is a great time for our buildings to rest, but the movement for a sustainable future never stops! Here is how your class can celebrate these global dates despite the holiday.

## World Wildlife Day - March 3, 2026!



From the lavender in your garden to the ancient cedar forests of BC, medicinal and aromatic plants are vital to our health and the heritage of Indigenous communities.

- **Do Something:** Research traditional medicinal plants in BC.

For more information, visit: [www.wildlifeday.org](http://www.wildlifeday.org)



## Global Recycling Day – March 18, 2026!

Recycling is a key part of the circular economy. We must look at our waste not as "trash," but as a resource.

- **Do Something:** Host a "Waste-Free Lunch Challenge." Bring reusable containers and reward the class with the least amount of landfill waste.

For more information, visit: [www.globalrecyclingday.com](http://www.globalrecyclingday.com)

## International Day of Forests - March 21, 2026!

Forests are the lungs of our planet, but they need our help. Innovation is providing new ways to monitor and protect our woodlands.

- **Do Something:** Take your class on a "Forest Walk" at a local park. Use a plant-identification app to catalog native species and discuss how technology helps us protect biodiversity.



For more information, visit: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

## World Water Day - March 22, 2026!



Water can create peace or spark conflict. When we protect our water, we protect our future.

- **Do Something:** Calculate your "Water Footprint." Discuss how much water is hidden in the products we use (like the 2,700 liters it takes to make one cotton t-shirt!) and brainstorm one way to save water at school.

For more details, visit: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

## WWF Earth Hour Day - March 28, 2026!

Earth Hour is more than just turning off the lights—it's a symbol of unity and hope for a sustainable future. Since its start in 2007, it has grown into a global movement where millions of people across 190 countries switch off non-essential lights to show they care about our one shared home.



- **Do Something:** Before everyone leaves for Spring Break, join our "Turn Off the Lights Challenge" on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Discuss how a "dark building" over the break is one of the most effective ways we reduce our carbon footprint.
- **On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>:** Encourage your families at home to participate from 8:30 PM to 9:30 PM. Do anything positive for the planet for 60 minutes!

For more information, visit: [www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org)



## What is going on at your school?



As we head into March, remember that your dedication is the fuel for our Low Carbon Sustainability Plan. By taking part in the Friday Fade-Out, you are leading a district-wide movement toward a more resilient future. Let's keep this momentum going through the break and return ready to grow.

At Coquitlam School District, we believe in the power of collective action for a sustainable future. If you or your school is making a positive impact on the environment, we want to celebrate and share your achievements with the community.

Connect with Adrian Pettyfer at [apettyfer@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:apettyfer@sd43.bc.ca) to share your eco-champion stories. Let's work together to get the word out and inspire more positive change.

