

The Importance and Benefits of Leadership in Conservation

By Peter Love



A major part of my job as Ontario's first Chief Energy Conservation Officer is to publicly recognize the leadership demonstrated by companies, organizations and individuals across the province in moving us toward a "culture of conservation." This is largely based on the lessons I learned as the first President of EnerQuality and Manager of the R-2000, EnerGuide and Energy Star for New Homes programs in Ontario.

As I cross the province, I continue to see evidence that Ontario's home building industry is a model for other sectors to follow. The new building techniques and products that leading, innovative builders have introduced and perfected result in better-built homes that are also more energy efficient and cost effective.

The Ontario government has become a leader in setting minimum energy performance standards in its building code as a direct result of the successful innovation of the province's home builders. This means that every new home built in Ontario is among the most energy efficient not only in Canada, but in North America. With the further improvements that will be made to the code in 2012, new Ontario homes will be among the most efficient in the world.

The home building industry's successful leadership in energy efficiency is an excellent, real-world example of the benefits of conservation, which I refer to as "the three Es":

- **Employment** — Conservation is labour intensive: Ontario companies hire Ontario employees to design, build, manufacture, wholesale, retail and install conservation products and deliver conservation services.

- **Economy** — Conservation saves money in homes, schools, hospitals, office buildings, stores, factories and resource industries; this stimulates further investments that lead to hiring more Ontarians and acquiring additional conservation products/services. In an Energy Star-qualified home I recently visited, the monthly savings were more than \$100, which is estimated to be equivalent to increasing the value of the home by about \$15,000.

- **Environment** — Conservation helps the environment; since 82% of Canada's man-made greenhouse gas emissions come from energy production and use, conservation is the first step in reducing our impact on the climate.

Congratulations to EnerQuality, for 10 years of leadership in the delivery of energy-efficient home building programs and training in Ontario. I also salute the founding shareholders, the Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance and the Ontario Home Builders Association for their foresight and inspired governance since the beginning, and the contribution of their corporate and government sponsors. And, above all, congratulations to the 323 builders who are actively participating in energy-efficiency programs. In 2007 alone, they built a combined total of 3,013 houses under the R-2000, EnerGuide and/or Energy Star programs.

And to those builders who have not yet enrolled in these programs, I strongly urge you to step up and become one of the recognized leaders in an industry that is showing others the way forward, or, as our kids would say, "Get with the program!"

Peter Love was appointed Ontario's first Chief Energy Conservation Officer in April 2005 to head the Conservation Bureau, a division of the Ontario Power Authority, and is a member of the OPA senior management team.

The mandate of the Chief Energy Conservation Officer is to provide leadership in electricity conservation and demand management and advance a conservation culture in Ontario. This includes championing the value of conservation and the benefit of participating in conservation programs; acknowledging the contributions of individuals and organizations that embrace conservation throughout the province; advocating for higher energy-efficiency codes and standards and the appointment of Municipal Energy Conservation Officers (MECOs) in every Ontario community.

Mr. Love has enjoyed a long and distinguished career in the area of energy efficiency. As the executive director of the Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance, he was a leading advocate for energy efficiency and its related benefits to the economy and the environment. In prior roles, he was responsible for managing the R-2000 and Energy Star Qualified New Homes programs. An active volunteer and community activist, Love has served on the National Advisory Committee on Energy Efficiency and as the director of the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain.

No stranger to the concept of a "cultural shift" in the province, early in his career Mr. Love worked as a project coordinator for Pollution Probe with the team that developed the concept "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle."

Mr. Love's commitment to sustainable buildings and energy efficiency earned a Lifetime Achievement Award in October 2007 from Sustainable Buildings Canada. He received his M.B.A. and B.A. from the University of Toronto. ■