

ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE: ALECTRA UTILITIES CORPORATION

One Planet, Many Communities and the Generations to Come



One of the distinctive attributes of [Alectra Utilities](#) and other local distribution companies is the extent to which they are plugged into priorities and sentiments within their service territories. With a number of Alectra's Greater Golden Horseshoe shareholder-municipalities declaring climate emergencies and enacting zero-waste policies, it was natural for the utility to step up its own efforts to improve and protect the environment.

"As a sustainable company, we are committed to meeting the needs of today and of future generations by empowering our employees, our customers and our communities to protect the environment while embracing innovation," said Dan Pastoric, VP Strategic Growth & Special Projects, Alectra Utilities.

Alectra has created a broad sustainability framework called AlectraCARES, which provides guidance to its employees and its executive on "People", "Planet" and "Performance" issues.

The environmental element of AlectraCARES, known as the "One Planet" program, earned Alectra the 2020 EDA Environmental Excellence Award.

Leading the way to a sustainable future

The One Planet program was designed to help Alectra achieve two major objectives: first, to reduce direct corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent between 2016 and 2026; and second, to cut waste by eliminating single-use plastics, collecting more organics and recycling, and using electricity more efficiently.

Alectra's Corporate Sustainability Committee guides and enables the implementation of One Planet initiatives throughout the company, with the participation of volunteer GREEN Team members and other employees, and by engaging with vendors as needed.

One Planet also encompasses seeking input and leveraging expertise more broadly. Most notably, this has involved twice-annual Sustainability Roundtables that bring together representatives of more than 20 municipal and regional governments, as well as several policy and advocacy agencies and associations.

Protecting the environment through innovation

The results of the One Planet program to date are impressive.

The One Planet program was designed to help Alectra achieve two major objectives: to reduce direct corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent between 2016 and 2026 and to cut waste of various kinds.

With GHG reductions already down by 19 per cent – a cumulative reduction of over 1,800 tonnes of carbon since 2016 – Alectra is tracking well ahead of target and looking to revise its original target. Contributing actions have included an anti-idling policy, facilitation of lower-impact commuting, and the generation of more than 25 GWh of solar energy at multiple installations. A switch to a district energy system at the Hamilton corporate office also cut onsite natural gas use by close to two-thirds.


Alectra also donated more than 600 surplus binders to school boards in Peel Region through The Creative Zone, a project through which items that might end up in a landfill are instead put to productive re-use by teachers in hundreds of local schools. This is another one of the innovative and community-benefitting ways in which Alectra is reducing waste.

Additionally, One Planet supports sustainability progress outside the bounds of Alectra's offices and operations. It includes funding for community initiatives, as well as providing a graduate fellowship for a student in the University of Toronto's Master of Science in Sustainability Management program – the inaugural recipient of which was named one of Canada's Top 30 Under 30 sustainability leaders by Corporate Knights.

"Environmental and social responsibility are foundational to Alectra's success and part of the fabric of this organization,"

said Brian Bentz, President and CEO, Alectra Inc. "Our focus on people, planet and performance speaks to the continuing value we provide to our employees, customers, communities and shareholders."

The AlectraCARES One Planet program is a compelling demonstration of what a local distribution company can achieve environmentally, and of how it can encourage others to act as well. The Earth, Alectra's many communities, and countless generations to come will all benefit from this innovative sustainability program.

"We can learn from businesses and utilities that are committed to sustainability and protecting the planet," said Dan Pastoric. "It will take our collective efforts to continue to make a difference. Alectra is open to collaborate on new initiatives and sharing our framework." 

Serving more than one million homes and businesses in Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe area, **Alectra Utilities** is now the largest municipally-owned electric utility in Canada, based on the total number of customers served. We contribute to the economic growth and vibrancy of the 17 communities we serve by investing in essential energy infrastructure, delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, and providing innovative energy solutions. Our mission is to be an energy ally, helping our customers and the communities we serve to discover the possibilities of tomorrow's energy future.



Alectra employees used their lunch break to clean up litter in support of the City of Vaughan's 20 Minute Makeover program.