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Two New Target Zero Initiatives Launch at The Forks New “Green” Tours Offered for School Children and The Forks Market Opens New “Green” Store

The Forks, Winnipeg – Just in time for Waste Reduction Week, we’re officially launching a new education program aimed at school aged children and celebrating a new tenant at The Forks Market.

The Forks as a whole has been working hard to reduce its carbon footprint for many years. From small things like conversion of waste fryer oil to fuel to bigger initiatives like recycling, bio-composting and geothermal heating and cooling, you name it we’ve tried it.

“Target Zero is not just a program to us, it’s really a mindset and touches everything we do, every single day,” says Paul Jordan, Chief Operating Officer, The Forks. “And with such a unique site we have had to be creative in how we accomplish just about everything on our greening list. We realize that others can learn from what we do here and we’ve turned that into an educational opportunity for kids.”

The Target Zero Eco Kids Tour, presented by Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba (MMSM), officially begins offering paid tours of the site this week. The tours are generously supported by MMSM.

“MMSM proudly supports the opportunity to educate our youth on the importance of recycling and our environment,” says Karen Melnychuk, Executive Director, MMSM. “By implementing programs such as the Target Zero Eco Kids Tour, we have a direct opportunity to become a hands-on learning environment for students to practice the positive behaviour of recycling, composting and energy reduction.”

The tours, created and executed in conjunction with Green Kids Inc., offer a 90 minute interactive walking experience for school aged children. Led by two actors, the tour stops at Target Zero hot spots like the Biovator, the geothermal loops, the rain water collectors near the parkade and finishes with a personal message the kids can do at home, reducing, reusing and recycling.

“There is great value in educating our children on the impact they have on the environment,” says Melnychuk, “Children who understand the process, and why it’s important will transfer that knowledge to their family and friends at home, supporting our overall goals”.

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The tours are best suited to grades 2-7 and can accommodate up to 30 students at a time. They will be offered throughout the entire school year, based on availability.

"We are very excited to be a part of Target Zero to Create and lead the Eco Kids Tours, as it allows everyone to gain environmental education and inspiration in a fun and interactive format, not previously seen before in Canada" says Daina Leitold, Executive Director Green Kids Inc.

Inside The Forks Market, another venture is now open to everyone, every day.

Generation Green, the first store of its kind at The Forks Market, just opened and is eager to serve the needs of the general public in a one stop shop.

"Our philosophy is to provide products that people use every day, but to offer ones that are better for our health and the environment," says Sherry Sobey, Owner, Generation Green at The Forks. "We offer everything from skin care to children's products, with an emphasis on refillable green cleaning products."

The shop, located in the South Aisle of The Forks Market, is also going to serve as a supplier to all Forks tenants in the future.

"As we move to 100% bio-degradable materials in our food courts, Generation Green will be able to buy the cups, plates and cutlery our tenants will use and be a warehouse for them," says Randy Cameron, General Manager, The Forks Market. "With greater buying power as a whole this will save our tenants, all of whom are 'mom and pop' operators, some money while fulfilling our goal to be the kindest to the environment that we can."

Generation Green is open regular Market hours.

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For more information, please contact:

Clare MacKay
Vice-President, Marketing and Communications
The Forks
Phone: 987.4360

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About Target Zero

We've got an impressive goal: zero garbage, zero water consumption and zero carbon emissions. We get nearly four million visitors a year. That's a lot of garbage, a lot of toilets being flushed, a lot of exhaust from cars and a lot of expensive power to heat and cool our buildings. It's also a lot of money going up the chimney, out the window, down the drain and into the garbage. So, we've come up with TARGET ZERO as a way to be good to the environment while saving money.

With TARGET ZERO we are working hard to reduce our impact on the Earth, so we're taking every step we can to implement innovative and responsible environmental practices.

For more information on the projects, go to www.theforks.com/targetzero

About MMSM

Multi-Material Stewardship Manitoba (MMSM) is an industry-funded, non-profit organization that operates a province-wide residential recycling program for packaging and printed paper, in accordance with the **Packaging and Printed Paper Stewardship Regulation**.

To help fund the program, industry stewards must pay levies on a broad range of packaging materials and printed paper, including newspapers and magazines, coffee cups and aluminum cans. These levies cover up to 80 percent of the cost of residential recycling programs for packaging and printed paper; municipalities pay the remaining 20 percent.

For more information, go to www.simplyrecycle.ca

About Green Kids Inc.

Green Kids Inc. is a Winnipeg Based Registered Charity that was established in 1991 to address the need for entertaining, educational programming for school-aged children about the importance of environmental stewardship. Geared towards inspiring a new generation of environmentally conscious adults, Green Kids Inc. has grown in vision and scope and has entertained over 1 million students, their educators, and local communities in over 1,000 schools in Manitoba, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

For more information go to www.greenkids.com

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About Generation Green at The Forks

Generation Green at The Forks offers eco-friendly, sustainable products for environmentally conscious consumers: skin care, cosmetics, unique items for toddlers and pets, plant based household cleaners, housewares, and indoor gardening and composting products. They also provide a platform for food developers across Canada, to showcase their products in a market setting. They are the first in Manitoba to offer an innovative 100% plant based laundry product made in Canada.

For more information go to www.generationgreenwpg.com

About Waste Reduction Week – October 15-21, 2012

Waste Reduction Week (WRW) in Canada is intended to raise public consciousness about waste and its environmental and social ramifications. The WRW theme, “**Too Good To Waste**” is about conveying an appreciation for the richness and beauty of our diverse world and the importance of working toward ecological sustainability by conserving resources and curbing wasteful practices.

WRW in Canada is coordinated by a coalition of 13 recycling councils and sister organizations from across Canada. Collaborating on a national level, this partnership promotes waste reduction on provincial/territorial and local levels.

For more information go to www.wrwcanda.com/