

The PEO Sustainable Development Seminar was a sold out success!



Over 100 participants attended the half-day session on "Sustainability in the Face of Declining Resources", held on March 6, 2002 at the Novotel Hotel in North York, featuring a keynote address by Dr. Stuart Smith of the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE). The Seminar was organized by the Sustainable Development Subcommittee of the PEO Environment Committee and sponsored by the PEO Willowdale-Thornhill Chapter.

Dr. Stuart Smith of NRTEE

Highlights included:

- Dr. Stuart Smith "Sustainable Development—The Canadian Approach"

A summary of the environment's increase and decrease in profile with the public and government over the past few decades, particularly in respect to the Rio Summit and the Kyoto Protocol.

Dr. Smith discussed how factors such as globalization, government budget cuts, the economy and public opinion have marginalized environmental issues in Canada.

Dr. Smith's organization, the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) is unique in providing a forum for representatives from various sectors (e.g. government, industry, Native Canadians, academic and non-governmental organizations) that reflects the spectrum of values in Canadian society. The NRTEE is currently developing a series of indicators to standardize measurements of natural capital. He explained why the NRTEE believe emissions credits are an important initiative in reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and the program's local and international effects.

The discussion that followed explored various issues, such as: the need for change to happen at the grassroots level, the importance of marketing and swaying public opinion to influence policymakers, the achievements of the NRTEE, the role of education in increasing environmental literacy and awareness, the lack of political leadership, comparisons with the anti-smoking public awareness campaigns, and advice for engineers. In response to a question on future catastrophes, Dr. Smith predicted that there will be global environmental catastrophes, and that while the Kyoto Protocol is a start, environmental efforts on a whole have not been significant or timely enough to prevent these disasters.

Other Speakers

Edward Kalinowski, P.Eng., Senior Process Engineer, DuPont Canada

Case Study: Co-Generation in the Real World

A presentation on the cost and emissions reductions of the co-generation plant at DuPont's Maitland site. Power outages in the 1980s occurred approximately six times per year. Each outage that lasted a few seconds caused one to two days' downtime. The co-generation site provides a more stable energy source at significant savings. Other DuPont sites are following suit.

Presentations and Round Table Discussion by Expert Panel:

- Michael Gilmor, M.Eng., P.Eng., FCSCE, Vice President Operations, Canadian Institute of Steel Construction
A presentation on the use of steel as a versatile, environmentally sound material. In addition to steel's many positive environmental aspects, there has been a significant decrease in energy consumption during the manufacturing process.
- Patrice Henson, B.Sc., Leader, Product Stewardship Council, NOVA Chemicals Corporation
NOVA leadership role in Responsible Care certification is demonstrated in its commitment to product safety and product life cycle management.
- Steven Young, PhD, P.Eng., Founding Director, Five Winds International
Implementing sustainable development presents significant challenges to organizations. The presentation describes how Five Winds facilitates business sustainability strategies, systems, procedures and tools—like product stewardship, environmental management and stakeholder engagement.



Moderator Douglas Webber, P.Eng. with panellists (left to right): Michael Gilmor, P.Eng., Patrice Henson, Steven Young, PhD, P.Eng. and Robert Munro, P.Eng.

Robert Munro, P.Eng., Technical Services Manager, Lafarge North America

Concrete is a 100 per cent recyclable product that serves as the foundation of modern society. It is durable and made to order, and has a low environmental impact. Because the concrete industry is market-driven,

the client needs to be more active in working with suppliers to ensure projects follow sustainability principles. In thanking the speakers, Gordon Sterling, P.Eng., PEO President, commended the participants and their organizations for their efforts to act as responsible stewards for the health of the environment. He also spoke of the engineer's role in protecting the public safety. "More and more that means not just protecting society, but also the future sustainability of our land and our resources. It means considering the long-term impact of the projects we supervise and the products we design and develop."



PEO President Gordon Sterling, P.Eng., (centre) with Willowdale-Thornhill Chapter Executive members Ali Ghane, P.Eng. (left) and Miriam Mozes, P.Eng. (right).



Participants look on during question and answer period.



Participants enjoy a coffee break between sessions.