



Université d'Ottawa | University of Ottawa

uOttawa Office of Campus Sustainability

July 25th, 2011

Water Fountain Renewal Program

I am writing this letter in order to confirm the details of our Fountain renewal program in order to apply for a STARS innovation credit.

In 2010, the University of Ottawa became a bottled water free campus; however, in order to accomplish this task we needed to win the trust of the community and demonstrate that the drinking fountains on campus were safe. The thinking being that if the campus were to become bottled water free, (1) the University would be morally obligated to ensure that everyone on campus had access to safe drinking water, and (2) community members would be more accepting of the ban if there were clean and accessible water fountains.

The process began with a complete analysis of the existing water fountains on campus, which was followed by the creation of a set of criteria that were selected to ensure that people would want to use the fountains on campus.

- 1) Accessible – Every water fountain on campus should meet barrier free standards. This would ensure that all campus community members would be able to enjoy the water.
- 2) Temperature – Every water fountain on campus should have a cooling unit to ensure that the water is cold.
- 3) Appearance – The water fountains on campus should be free of rust and grime. Community members are more willing to drink from clean fountains feeling more assured that they are sanitary.
- 4) Pressure - The pressure of all fountains on campus should be adjusted to ensure that the users of the fountain do not have to strain in order to drink the water. Users of the fountains would be discouraged if they water was discharged as a trickle.
- 5) Goosenecks – Every fountain on campus should have a “gooseneck” tap that allows users to refill their water canteens with ease.

After a full inspection of all fountains on campus, the University's Physical Resources Service invested \$75,000 annually to ensure that the fountains would be able to meet these rigorous standards. To this end, new fountains have been installed to replace older ones, older fountains have been renovated to meet the new standards, adjustments have been made to ensure optimal performance, and regular inspections of the fountains have continued. Further to this, campus community members were consulted as to where they would like to see new fountains in an effort to increase their convenience.

When the campus finally became bottled water free in 2010, a great deal of its success was due to the renewal of the water fountains. The University has also built credibility within the community and established a strong rapport with the Student Union. The program is still operating today and progress reports are available upon request.

Sincerely,

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