

# Go Green with ONPHA!

## Going Carbon Neutral

Your organization has taken measures to reduce its carbon footprint through conservation and switching to low-impact alternatives like compact florescent bulbs. So, what's next on your Going Green agenda?

If you don't have the capital for a major LEED-certified redevelopment or an investment in high-efficiency appliances, there are other ways that you can have a big impact on reducing your carbon footprint even further.

By purchasing carbon offsets, also known as carbon credits, you can effectively reduce your net carbon emissions to zero, neutralizing whatever emissions remain.

### What is a Carbon Offset?

A carbon offset is a financial instrument designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by applying a dollar value to their environmental cost. Typically, purchasing carbon offsets supports renewable energy or other green projects, such as wind farms, solar energy, low-impact hydro or geothermal energy programs. The price of the offset you purchase is determined by the carbon output of a given activity, such as taking a flight or heating your building with natural gas.

In Ontario, carbon offsetting is a voluntary market, typically adding an optional premium to retail purchases such as airfares and utility costs.

### How does it work?

Sites like [www.carbonzero.ca](http://www.carbonzero.ca) feature an easy-to-use calculator to assess the carbon emissions created by your air and ground travel, electricity and heating. The company supports renewable energy and building retrofit projects in Canada, including the energy-efficient retrofit of a social housing project in Quebec.

Air Canada works with Zerofootprint, an offset retailer supporting such projects as Landfill Gas Recovery and Tire Recycling operations. You have the option of offsetting your airfare when you purchase your ticket from Air Canada. For a fare from Toronto to Ottawa, the offset costs only a few dollars extra.

Bullfrog Power Inc. injects clean, carbon-neutral energy into your regional electric grid to offset the power your organization or home consumes. Like the other retailers mentioned here, Bullfrog projects are verified by third-party auditors, and in Bullfrog's case, are certified by Environment Canada under its EcoLogo program. Bullfrog adds a premium of 3 cents per kWh to your hydro bill.

**Bullfrog Power is providing 100% of the power for the Opening Plenary and Trade Show at the ONPHA Annual Conference this year.**



**Why should I go carbon neutral?**

Ideally, it's best for the environment for our carbon emissions to be zero in our operations and day-to-day activities. Unfortunately, we can only *reduce* our energy consumption and carbon emissions; we can never completely eliminate them.

Carbon offsetting is an economical way to effectively reduce or eliminate carbon emissions that wouldn't otherwise be addressed. Many projects also generate demand for clean energy alternatives in the marketplace. By applying a dollar value to the environmental cost of carbon emissions, we can easily play a bigger part in reducing our impact on climate change and exercise our corporate and social responsibilities.

For more information about carbon offsetting, visit ONPHA's Going Green webpage at [www.onpha.on.ca/green](http://www.onpha.on.ca/green).



**Got a Going Green story you would like to share?**

Contact Neel Modi at  
1-800-297-6660 ext. 117 or  
by email at [neel.modi@onpha.org](mailto:neel.modi@onpha.org).

For more **Going Green** tips and resources, please visit us at [www.onpha.on.ca/green](http://www.onpha.on.ca/green).

**STORY CORRECTION**

In the last edition of *Quick Connections*, the lifespan of new furnaces installed in buildings operated by Nepean Housing was stated incorrectly. The article should have said that "maintenance costs will be reduced, with little work required for the first 12 to 15 years, but we anticipate the lifespan of the furnaces will be **20 to 25 years.**"



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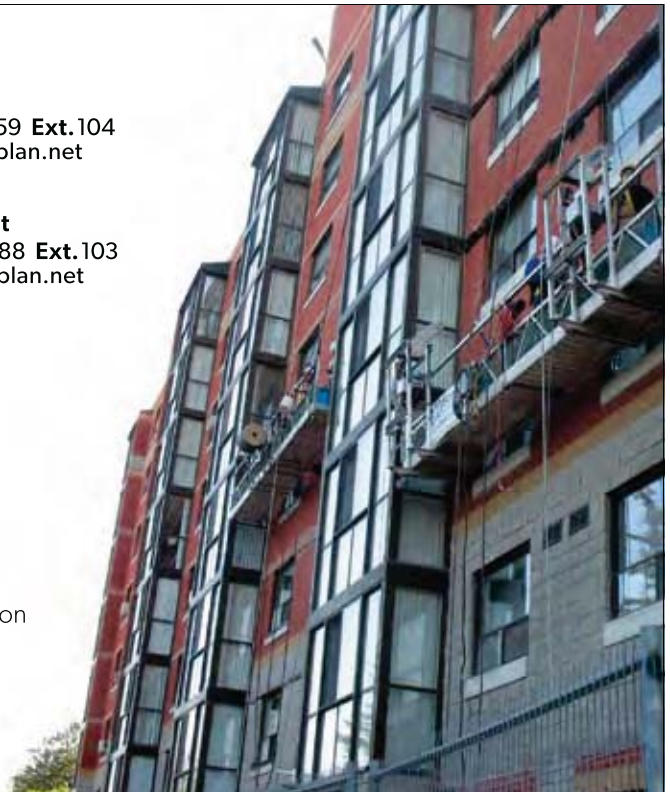
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