

# 88 ERSKINE

## Leads the Way in Environmental Responsibility

**A**t 88 Erskine Avenue, Toronto, a Greenwin Property Management Inc.-managed building at Yonge and Eglinton with close to 500 apartments, "reducing the amount of waste going to landfill is as much about convenience as it is about commitment," says Greenwin CEO Kevin Green.

Over the last five years, a number of initiatives have been introduced at 88 Erskine to drastically reduce the volume of waste going to landfills, with impressive results. Surprisingly, notes Green, most of these ideas have been generated by the building staff and residents themselves.

"The program started just a few years ago," says Resident Manager Peter Welsh, "when building residents and management started to become more conscious of how important it was to recycle." When the City decided to collect all recyclables without having to sort them, building management reconfigured the garbage chutes to accommodate the large blue bins and established a new weekly schedule. On Mondays and Thursdays residents can now throw their recyclables right down the chute. The ease of not having to carry bags of recyclables down in the elevator and in the winter outside in the cold has resulted in a significant increase in participation. On all other days regular bagged garbage can be placed in the chute.

In addition, a designated room was established on the ground floor to serve as a depot for special items such as liquid bottles, printer cartridges, batteries, eye glasses, cell phones and other electronics, and compact fluorescent bulbs, that require special collection or attention by the City. The City's Toxics Taxi now picks up batteries, while a non-profit organization collects eye glasses for distribution to those who cannot afford them. Building management return the beer and liquor bottles and all monies collected go to the building's "Green fund."



*Greenwin CEO Kevin Green in the recycle room at 88 Erskine Avenue. The 500 suite building has reduced its brown bin garbage collection by more than 50 per cent.*

Eating locally grown produce reduces the energy required to transport food from the grower to the table. To give residents the opportunity to have individual small gardens on the building's large property, a pilot project was initiated in 2010, with great success, and an expansion is planned for 2011. And even though the City has been rolling out "Green" composting in multi-residential buildings, 88 Erskine has set up its own Compost project, separate from the City's Green Waste program, voluntarily reducing the amount of food waste going into the garbage.

In addition to reducing waste, residents and management have demonstrated their commitment to reducing energy consumption. Two events were hosted in the building in which residents had the opportunity exchange up to five incandescent light bulbs for Energy Star Compact Fluorescents. Unwanted window air conditioning units and humidifiers were also exchanged for gift cards, courtesy of Toronto Hydro. In-suite light fixtures that do not use CFL bulbs are being replaced on turnover and additional CFL bulbs are given to residents on move-in for their lamps.

To reduce paper use and waste, the building no longer delivers notices door-to-door. Quarterly newsletters and notices are now available for pick up at the front desk



*Greenwin CEO Kevin Green demonstrates the new composter at 88 Erskine Avenue being tested to help divert green waste in the company's flagship building.*

as well as electronically. An annual yard sale allows residents to sell and exchange existing goods and products.

The combined impact of many things can make a big difference when it comes to the environment. Since the City implemented its Garbage Levy, 88 Erskine has been able to reduce its volume of garbage by almost 50 per cent. "It's a remarkable achievement, and Greenwin is proud to be leading the way in high rise waste diversion," says Green.