

# the TORONTO CONGRESS CENTRE

## **Title: Toronto Congress Centre North is GREEN from the ground up**

### **SUB: Half million square foot addition successfully mixes sustainability with user-friendly attributes for a future forward take on convention and trade show facilities**

Since the exhibit halls of the 500,000 square foot Toronto Congress Centre North opened in January, this remarkable building has captured the attention of meeting planners and media as one of the world's most sustainable trade and convention facilities.

Already the largest privately owned show and meeting place in Canada, Toronto Congress Centre (TCC), a division of Congress Centres Inc. has doubled its space to one million square feet. Located near Toronto's Pearson International Airport and north of the existing Toronto Congress Centre, the expansion positions the facility among the top ten largest on the continent, and the greenest in the world.

*Norr Architects* of Toronto oversaw Toronto Congress Centre's need for additional capacity by re-purposing a derelict building on the north end of the property. The goal was to turn the unused space into an eco-friendly, multi-functional facility that would compliment the adjacent trade centre. The result is a revolutionary design and a lesson in applied ecology that far exceeds today's environmental building standards.

From its construction phase onward, architects, engineers and management took care to limit the building's environmental impact. Toronto Congress Centre North operates using less energy, less water, with more fresh air, more natural light and less toxins and waste than any other facility.

Working toward a goal of 75% zero waste construction, most of the building materials from the demolished building, except for its steel framing, were diverted, re-used or recycled. Concrete, bricks and mortar were painstakingly separated, crushed and recycled into site-fill. New construction materials were chosen according to recycled, enviro-friendly and reusable content. To further reduce its carbon footprint only local building materials and construction trades were chosen.

Why green?

Superior air quality is among the most significant user benefits. Unlike many buildings where re-circulated air can contribute to drowsiness or health concerns, no expense has been spared by Toronto Congress Centre to provide clean, fresh air for delegates and exhibitors. Double the recommended air exchange units ensure maximum air exchange. The by-product of this eco-friendly, state-of-the-art technology is heightened meeting productivity and reduced health issues. Low VOC carpeting and the use of chemical free paints and cleaners mean the air is virtually allergen free.

Attendees won't know it, but while they are working, energy efficient lighting, dimmer controls, LED exit signs, occupancy sensors and compact fluorescents that reduce white noise are quietly at work improve the atmosphere and reduce the carbon footprint of each event. Even the glass walled lobby area does its part with thick insulating, low E argon filled glass that offers higher thermal loading.

Low flow, low flush and auto flush plumbing throughout save hundreds of gallons of water daily, especially during big events. A storm water management system will eventually filter sediment before it enters the city's storm sewers and provide rainwater irrigation to the surrounding landscaping. The foundations for a green roof have been installed, and soon, a living roof will be place to absorb carbon dioxide and emit oxygen, further reducing the heat island effects from building operation and improving storm water management.

To further reduce waste, Toronto Congress Centre North has made a point of being linen free and paper free. High energy hand dryers in washrooms mean less paper disposal. Attractive tabletops for meetings and formal gatherings are available to reduce the need for laundry, further reducing water usage and chemical cleaners.

Safety systems and lighting are backed-up by a 375 KW emergency power generator that ensures "the show will go on". The generator can shave peak electrical loads and will soon be able to "load shed" excess electrical power back to the grid and co-generation of electricity is part of the plan.

This summer xeriscopic (low water) gardens are being planted and plans are underway to purchase green power and incorporate photo-voltaic lighting.

Ms. Carey adds, "Customer demand for more space led to this expansion, and Toronto Congress Centre's reputation for excellence has meant a very high customer return rate. Our new addition meets current customers' needs and more, and will continue to be managed with our ever forward commitment to great customer experiences."

Toronto Congress Centre North is a green and healthy place for business and special functions, and has recently been nominated for the prestigious Brownie award from the Canadian Urban Institute. Its enviro-friendly policies, reduced energy use, superior air quality and allergen free environment, as well as HACCP accreditation ensuring the highest level of food safety practices worldwide, earmark this new addition to the Canadian meeting and trade show scene as a healthy, future forward and responsible place for business.

Toronto Congress Centre is located at 650 Dixon Road, Toronto. More information is available at [www.torontocongresscentre.com](http://www.torontocongresscentre.com)

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