



EnviroBoutique Manager Dana Silk. Photo Bill Blackstone

EnviroBoutique opens

City's non-profit partner sets up Rideau St. shop

Ralph Blaine

The new store at 366 Rideau Street may not offer the fresh okra, coriander and curry leaves of the previous tenant but it does offer its own version of green products. Walk into the freshly renovated premises of **EnviroBoutique** where General Manager Dana Silk or Office Manager Melanie Johnston will enthusiastically take you on a tour of the many energy efficient strategies integrated into their new location.

This building, which is an older home typical of many in the northern sector of Sandy Hill, is being turned into a demonstration centre for how to retrofit an older home to maximize energy efficiency. Soon visitors will be able to see how they have insulated the basement walls and the spaces between the floor joists under the first floor. You can already see LED lighting in the showroom and a high efficiency furnace connected to the hot water heating system. If any of the many installations you find catch your interest, they can recommend a contractor for the installation.

EnviroBoutique is a new venture of EnviroCentre, a non-profit organization that still offers a walk-in energy-efficiency advisory service at City Hall. In addition to continuing to offer energy audits (no more grants for now) as well as electricity audits, EnviroCentre also has a special program to help install energy efficient solutions in low-income households (both public and privately owned units) and they have recently finished installing upgrades in two houses here in Sandy Hill – two among 131 units they worked on last year in Ottawa.

EnviroBoutique is now almost fully stocked with energy efficient devices that you may not easily find in the average hardware store, including mercury-free LED bulbs. Right now you can buy a solar charger for mobile phones, fireplace draftbusters, and devices for tracking your electricity use room by room. You can also see (and even use) a Canadian-designed ultra-high efficiency three-litre single flush

toilet and pick up the best clothes drying rack on the market. As a bonus, you can also drop off your old CFL bulbs and small batteries for recycling.

Last but not least is an impressive selection of environmentally and socially friendly designer products from around the world, including colorful pillows made from recycled seatbelts, dog beds made from recycled plastic bottles, and shaving kits made in Vancouver from recycled sails. Great ideas for presents!

Visit EnviroBoutique at 366 Rideau or check out www.envirocentre.ca.



A storefront on Rideau near Nelson has been converted from Asian grocery to purveyor of earth-friendly devices and designer products.