

Free menstrual products available at two City facilities

March 6, 2020 – Visitors to two St. Catharines recreation facilities will find menstrual products available free of charge in washrooms, as part of a pilot project.

Dispensers have been installed in two women’s washrooms and two accessible washrooms at Seymour-Hannah Sports and Entertainment Centre and two washrooms and the women’s change room and universal change room at the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre. Tampons and pads are stocked in the coin-free dispensing machines.

City Council approved the pilot project in September 2019, saying it aligned with the social sustainability pillar in the City’s strategic plan by ensuring residents, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have equal access to menstrual products. The Council motion was tabled, in part, after a study indicated 34 per cent of women and girls in Canada have had to regularly or occasionally sacrifice something else within their budget to afford menstrual products.

“Access to free hygienic products is an issue of equity,” said Mayor Walter Sendzik. “Ensuring that our facilities and programming are accessible means working to overcome all potential barriers facing people who use the City’s services and programs.”

The motion approved by Council last September also encouraged other municipalities in the province, as well as school boards, to start up similar initiatives at facilities.

The pilot project will run for six months and will be used to assess the extent to which free products are used, the cost of the service and the logistics involved with offering the products.

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