

Apolitical: How to write with impact in the public service

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What are you up against?

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- ▶ Information overload and competing demands for our attention
- ▶ Misinformation and disinformation
- ▶ Decreasing trust in government
- ▶ Busy decision makers or colleagues who may not be subject matter experts
- ▶ Language barriers

What can you do?

Simplify

Use:

- short sentences (15-20 words)
- active voice
- first and second person (you, we)
- visuals

Organize content (headers and lists)

How simplifying helps

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Increase compliance

Get people to do what you want or need

- From making decisions to taking action, it's easier for people to do what you're asking for when the ask is clear

Improve understanding

Spend less time answering questions and addressing complaints

- Lack of understanding causes frustration which can lead to push back

Better translation

Help make sure information is translated accurately

- Difficult words and concepts can lead to misinterpretation by people and AI

Language

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Before	After
City of Guelph proceeding with Emma Street to Earl Street active transportation bridge	City of Guelph moving ahead with Emma Street to Earl Street foot and bike bridge
The City will transform physical space into reimagined Downtown streets at Art on the Street on June 24	City of Guelph transforming downtown space into reimagined streetscape on June 24
City to begin discharging sewage into manhole along Torch Lane	City managing sewage flows on Torch Lane starting June 19
Since the spring, residents have been able to subscribe for updates on the program launch while final details were confirmed. On July 31, the program documents will become available and those eligible can begin the application process.	Almost 200 people have already subscribed for updates about the program and will be the first to be notified when the program goes live on July 31.
Guelph expanding traffic infrastructure to further improve road safety and accessibility in 2023	City of Guelph making roads safer for everyone with more bike lanes and lower speed limits

Structure

City's Guelph Greener Homes program launching July 31

Guelph, Ont., July 24, 2023 – Starting July 31, Guelph residential property owners can apply for a zero-interest loan of up to \$50,000 to help cover the costs of energy efficient home retrofits.

The [Guelph Greener Homes](#) program was developed as part of the City's commitment to sustainability and [Race to Zero](#) goal of becoming a net zero carbon community by 2050. The program aims to help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, make homes more energy-efficient and comfortable to support a future-ready Guelph.

"We all must do our part to fight climate change," says Bryan Ho-Yun, Manager, Corporate Energy and Climate Change, "our goal is this program will make energy-efficient upgrades more accessible for Guelph residents to help lower greenhouse gas emissions."

Since the spring, residents have been able to [subscribe](#) for updates on the program launch while final details were confirmed. On July 31, the program documents will become available and those eligible can begin the application process.

Guelph residents interested in the program should keep in mind there are several steps required to complete the application process starting with making sure you're eligible. Once confirmed, residents should schedule and complete initial home energy assessment, submit their project for approval, complete eligible upgrades, schedule and complete follow-up home energy assessment, and submit invoices and the final assessment report to get their zero-interest loan.

To be eligible for the program you must be an owner of a residential low-rise building more than five years old in Guelph with a property tax account that has no back taxes, liens, or title disputes, have not started the home improvements, and all registered owner(s) of the property must consent to participating in the program.

Building upgrades like insulation, air-sealing, windows, and door repair/replacement, mechanical systems such as air source heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and heat recovery systems, control systems such as smart or programmable thermostat, renewable energy systems including solar photovoltaic systems, and solar hot water systems all qualify.

The Guelph Greener Homes Program also offers a grant for heat pumps to qualifying low-income applicants. This applies to property owners who are primary residents of the property, and family income (before taxes) is less than or equal to the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-Off. Upon review of the application a Guelph Greener Homes Program advisor will get in touch with you to further discuss your application.

For more information about eligibility requirements, the application process, or qualifying home retrofits, visit guelph.ca/greenerhomes

City of Guelph's Greener Homes program launches July 31

Guelph, Ont., July 24, 2023 – Starting July 31, Guelph homeowners can apply for a zero-interest loan of up to \$50,000 to help cover the costs of energy-efficient home retrofits from windows and doors, to heat pumps and solar-powered systems.

The [Guelph Greener Homes](#) program is part of the City's commitment to sustainability as it strives to become a net-zero carbon community by 2050 and win the [Race to Zero](#). The loan program will help homeowners reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and support a future-ready Guelph while making homes more comfortable with money-saving, energy-efficient upgrades.

"We all need to be part of the fight against climate change, and we know people in our community want to play their part," says Bryan Ho-Yan, the City's manager of Corporate Energy and Climate Change. "This program will make energy-efficient upgrades more accessible for Guelph homeowners."

Almost 200 people have already [subscribed](#) for updates about the program and will be the first to be notified when the program goes live on July 31.

How to apply

Six steps will get homeowners on their way to accessing loan funds:

1. Check [eligibility](#)
2. Schedule and complete a home energy assessment
3. Submit the home assessment with planned upgrades for approval
4. Once approved, complete upgrades
5. Schedule and complete a follow-up home energy assessment
6. Submit invoices and the final assessment report to get the loan

Information packages will be available in alternative languages. Please contact guelphgreenerhomes@guelph.ca or call 519-822-1260 extension 3984 to request information in your preferred language.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for the program you must own a low-rise (detached, semi-detached, townhouse, or rowhouse) residential property in the municipality of the City of Guelph that's at least five years old, and:

- have a property tax account with the City
- have consent from all listed property owners to participate in the program
- have no back taxes, liens, or title disputes on the property
- have not started improvements for which you plan to use the loan for

What types of upgrades qualify?

The loan can be used to cover the costs of:

- building upgrades including insulation, air-sealing, window and door repair or replacement
- mechanical systems such as air source heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and heat recovery systems
- Control systems such as smart or programmable thermostats
- Renewable energy systems including solar power and solar hot water systems

Low-income applicants may also qualify for a grant for air source heat pumps (up to \$15,000). Grants are available to property owners who are primary residents of the property for which the air source heat pump is being installed, with a family income (before taxes) less than or equal to the low income cut-off as defined by the program. A Guelph Greener Homes program advisor will reach out to qualifying applicants to provide more information.

To learn more about the Guelph Greener Homes program, eligibility requirements, the application process, or qualifying home retrofits, visit guelph.ca/greenerhomes

Fast facts about Guelph's electric buses

- The buses can be fully charged in about three hours.
- Electric bus travels up to an average of 300 kilometres per charge.
- Each electric bus has six battery packs: four on the roof and two behind the rear wheels.
- Electric buses are quieter, which will help to reduce noise pollution in the city.

Fast facts about Guelph's **ELECTRIC** buses

They can be fully charged in about three hours



They can travel an average of 300km per charge



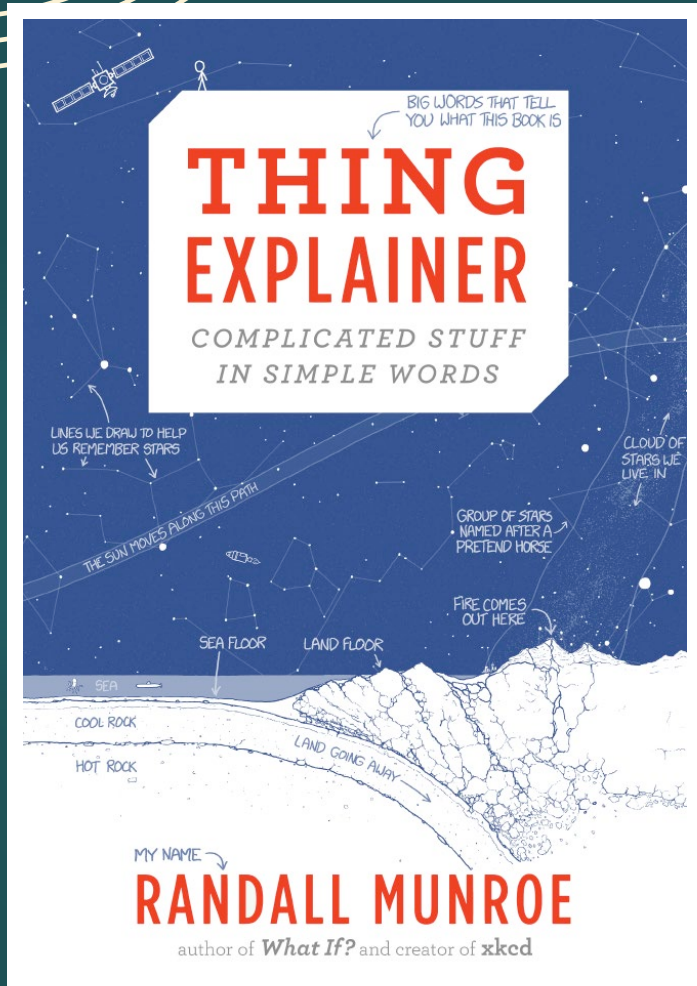
They're quieter, helping to reduce noise pollution



Each bus has **6** batteries



A real pro



xkcd.com/1133/

US SPACE TEAM'S UP GOER FIVE

THE ONLY FLYING SPACE CAR THAT'S
TAKEN ANYONE TO ANOTHER WORLD

(EXPLAINED USING ONLY THE TEN HUNDRED
WORDS PEOPLE USE THE MOST OFTEN)

THING TO HELP PEOPLE ESCAPE REALLY FAST
IF THERE'S A PROBLEM AND EVERYTHING IS ON
FIRE SO THEY DECIDE NOT TO GO TO SPACE

STUFF TO BURN TO MAKE THE BOX WITH
THE PEOPLE IN IT ESCAPE REALLY FAST

THING TO CONTROL WHICH DIRECTION
THE ESCAPING PEOPLE GO

PLACE WHERE FIRE COMES
OUT TO HELP THEM ESCAPE

PEOPLE BOX

PART THAT FLIES AROUND THE OTHER
WORLD AND COMES BACK HOME WITH THE
PEOPLE IN IT AND FALLS IN THE WATER.

DOOR
CHAIRS

COLD AIR FOR BURNING (AND BREATHING)
THIS PART HAD A VERY BIG PROBLEM ONCE

PART THAT GOES ALONG TO GIVE PEOPLE
AIR, WATER, COMPUTERS, AND STUFF.
IT COMES BACK HOME WITH THEM
BUT BURNS UP WITHOUT LANDING.



““ People think I’m an ignorant b***d who doesn’t know the ten-dollar words. I know the ten-dollar words. There are older and better words which, if you arrange them in the proper combination, you make it stick.””**

Ernest Hemingway

Resources

Grammarly.com

Hemingway editor (hemingwayapp.com)

Made to Stick (book) by Chip and Dan Heath

Don't Be Such a Scientist (book) by Randy Olson

plainlanguage.gov (USA)

gov.uk/guidance/content-design/writing-for-gov-uk

Up-goer Five text editor (splasho.com/upoer5/)