

# Green school praised

## St. Christopher most energy efficient in province

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While St. Christopher's Catholic elementary school children were decked out in bright yellow T-shirts Wednesday, they were actually celebrating the greening of their school.

The newly renovated and expanded elementary school, at Conservation Drive and E.C. Row Service Road, was recognized Wednesday as the most energy-efficient school in Ontario and the fourth most in Canada.

The school is 60 per cent more energy efficient than national energy code standards, said Michel Lamanque, account manager with Natural Resources Canada, which gave the school a \$50,000 grant.

Administrators expect to save about \$25,000 per year on gas, electricity and water bills.

The energy-saving components include waterless urinals, a heating system that runs under the floor and Fiberglas-framed windows that are warm to the touch even in winter. Sensors auto-

matically shut off light fixtures and adjust light intensity.

One of the most striking environmental components is a 5,000-square-foot green roof.

"I see it as a building with a bit of hair on top of it," said architect Joseph Passa, who also designed the renovations of Lady of Mount Carmel elementary school, which received similar environmental honours in June 2004.

"That was our first crack and we did well," Passa said. "This one is much, much better because we had options to do more."

The roof is covered with native plants growing in a six-inch layer of high-tech dirt, Passa said. Swaths of green and yellow flow across the roof much like a wildflower field alongside a country road. The green roof helps insulate the building, but also cools it in summer because it deflects heat. A standard tar roof normally absorbs heat, making the building more expensive to cool.

The building extension also has waterless urinals that flush with an environmentally friendly chemical that is changed once a month.