

Sewers To Heat Vancouver 2010 Athletes' Village

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The city of Vancouver plans to use its sewers to help heat the Athletes' Village at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Officials want to develop a sustainable energy system to heat the buildings and have decided to use heat from the sewers, when it was discovered a proposed biomass system, which would have used fuels such as wood chips, reportedly could not have been built in time.

Chris Baber, project manager for the city of Vancouver's Neighbourhood Energy Utility, called the sewer-heat system very similar to geothermal energy. According to Baber much as geothermal systems use heat exchangers to extract heat from the soil the sewer-heat system uses exchangers to extract the otherwise waste heat from the city's sewage and can then be used to warm up buildings and provide hot water. Natural gas will be used as a supplemental energy source on exceptionally cold days, he said.

Baber said when fully constructed the sewer-heat recovery system will heat a wider neighbourhood area that includes the Athletes' Village. Construction costs are \$20 million and will be paid through user fees.

Although there are two similar sewer-heat recovery systems in Norway and one in Japan, Vancouver's would be the first in North America and is scheduled for completion in 2009.

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