



HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

INTERVIEW



An interview with mayor of the Healthy City of Litoměřice, Mr. Ladislav Chlupáč

Collaboration with citizens is important for industrial risk prevention

The Earth recently celebrated its name day and Litoměřice hosted an international conference on this day. Can you tell us more about its subject and why it took place exactly in Litoměřice?

The city of Litoměřice neighbours with Lovosice, a centre of chemical industry – with factories like Lovochemie Lovosice a.s. (the largest producer of fertilisers in the Czech Republic) and Glanzstoff-Bohemia a.s. (viscose fibre producer). For this reason, the offer to host this international conference, focused on application of precautionary principles, prevention and participation in the field of industrial risks, is very contributive and we, as a Healthy City were glad to make use of this opportunity. The meeting was initiated by the Italian City of Seveso that was affected by chemical catastrophe in a form of dioxin escape from local factory, thirty two years ago. The former population was not informed about the accident and it was only after six days that people were informed about what happened. Together with Seveso colleagues and with a number of local institutions we held a "round-table discussion" on how to prevent a similar accident happening in our country. We know that technical security measures reach a high standard, but nothing can be ruled out completely. It is for this reason that we agreed right on the spot on realisation of joint integrated rescue system rehearsal during simulated accident and doing so we will test the preparedness of all of us, including that of our inhabitants.

What other events took place on the Earth Day in Litoměřice?

In Litoměřice we traditionally focus the Earth Day Campaign on children and youth. In the course of the whole month there took place about ten events such as Come See the Animals with Us, The Earth Day in Rosemary, Eco-movie, Gallery Full of Blossoms etc. For the first time this year we have offered our inhabitants the possibility to return the old home appliances directly on Mírové Square in the city centre. However, environmental education is far from finished from our part this year. Commencing as soon as in July, we have prepared the favourite event for parents with children – The Walk on Earth.

Litoměřice are well known for their qualities in the field of green energetic, in particular for utilisation of renewable

energy resources. Does the municipal council serve as an example also in other areas, for instance in waste sorting, recycling and other areas?

The municipal council, in addition to installation of solar panels and heat pumps in buildings owned by the city, has been also employing separation of waste for paper, plastic and small electro-waste.

TOPIC OF THE MONTH: "THE EARTH DAY 2008"

Environmental protection is the main subject of the Earth day Campaign since 1970, when this feast was celebrated for the first time on 22nd April in American San Francisco. It still has not lost any of its appeal for the necessity of friendly approach to the environment, as the negative impacts of human activity on Earth still persist. From the very beginning, the idea of Earth Day celebrations also lies in drawing attention to possible alternatives represented by more friendly approach to the environment, among others in the field of waste recycling, utilisation of renewable energy resources or in reduction of air-pollutant emissions release. The Earth Day Celebrations connect global issues such as climate protection with local subjects, for instance in a form of tree planting or collection of waste paper. The Earth Day in the Czech Republic has been celebrated since 1990. Even this year a number of events took place in the Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions. 36 HCCZ members participated overall. The programme of celebrations was as usual very rich, ranging from household energy-saving consultancy to municipal tidying or cleaning of springs. In the course of the whole April, people could directly participate in the activities that help to improve the living environment in



a given area. For children there were interesting games prepared on the subject of seeing and protecting nature.

The following HCCZ members joined the campaign this year: *Adamov, Bolatice, Boskovice, Brno, Hlučín, Hodonín, Chrudim, Jihlava, Jilemnice, Kopřivnice, Kroměříž, Křižánky, Kuřim, Litoměřice, Lomnice nad Popelkou, Mladá Boleslav, Moravská Třebová, Orlová, Poděbrady, Praha – Libuš and Písnice, Prostějov, Přestice, Strakonice, Říčany, Štětí, Tábor, Telč, Třebíč, Uherské Hradiště, Uherský Brod, Ústí nad Labem, Varnsdorf, Velké Meziříčí, Vsetín, Dražanská vrchovina Microregion and Vysočina Region.*

THE EARTH DAY REMINDS THE INHABITANTS OF THE WHOLE PLANET OF THE NECESSITY TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

The Earth Day celebrations in the whole world even this year took place with focus on the issue of global climate changes. The Earth Day activities in the Czech Republic take place in the course of the whole spring period. It is for the second time that the Ministry of Environment supported tens of events and programmes within the framework of umbrella campaign Spring for the Earth.

Global climate changes are the subject of primary importance

The tradition of international environmental feast reaches as far as to year 1970, when American Senator Gaylord Nelson, supported by other politicians, initiated a campaign for support of renewable resources, recycling of materials and reduction of pollutants in atmosphere. The aim of the campaign was to support public interest in the subject of living environment and make this subject a part of political discussion. The historically first Earth Day of 22 April 1970 was attended by millions of American citizens, especially students. The American tradition was gradually followed by other states and in 1990 there were Earth Day events held in 3,600 locations of the world with participation of 200 millions of people, which made this event the biggest publically organised activity in history.

In the recent years, protection of the world climate has become an increasingly relevant subject and for this reason even this year's Earth Day was focused exactly on impacts of global climate change. As a part of campaign under the title **"Call for Climate"**, the representatives of legislative bodies are called upon to adopt measures for world climate protection. The Earth Day 2008 was globally the largest in its history, the Call for Climate Campaign was joined by hundreds of millions people across the globe. Details about the global climate campaign can be found on website <http://www2.earth-day.net/callforclimate>.

The ministry of the Environment supports the Earth Day-related activities in the Czech Republic

A number of events annually take place as a part of the Earth Day celebrations in the Czech Republic with a focus on saving energy in living and building industry, recycling of waste, planting of trees or cleaning of public areas. The Earth Day activities are joined by

cities, municipalities, non-profit organisations as well as by representatives of the private sector. It is already for the second time that the Ministry of Environment announced a framework campaign called **Spring for the Earth**, whose objective is to draw the public attention to the issue of environmental protection through promotion of tens of events across the Czech Republic. The Spring for the Earth Campaign started on 21st March and ends by the World Environmental Day of 5th June. The **Week of Sustainable Development** was also a part of Spring for the Earth. Josef Vavroušek Prizes, awarded by the Partnership Foundation and by Foundation Charta 77, will be also presented as a part of official campaign termination.



BEST PRACTICE

The Earth Day is an opportunity for environmental education and for practical cleaning in cities and municipalities

It has already become a tradition that new trees are planted and public areas are cleaned along with natural locations during the Earth Day Campaign in the Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions. Forums dedicated to the subject of environmental protection, energy saving and recycling of waste took place again this year. For children there were prepared meetings with animals and art and scientific competitions. The campaign has been also joined by its umbrella organisation, the Healthy Region Vysočina, which supported the activities of Healthy Cities and Municipalities within its region from its subsidy programme.



The Earth Day celebrations in the Healthy City of Chrudim set a new Czech record in a form of longest chain made of PET bottle caps, measuring 2,500 meters altogether.

Events related to saving energy in regular operation of domestic houses and whole municipalities took place in connection with Earth Day celebration across the whole Czech Republic. Within the framework of Earth Day celebrations held on 22nd April in the Healthy City of **Chrudim** on Ressel Square, the results of children's art competition for children of kindergartens and basic schools were announced. The subject was "Saving the Earth, Saving Energy, Using Renewable Resources". Consultancy services in the area of energy saving presented by company Ekowatt, including information on energy-saving measures in residential and family houses along with those on principles of low-energy houses construction were also a part of the Earth Day programme. On 29th April, the local Eco-info-centre of the Healthy City of **Jihlava** organised a seminar with title „Passive Houses – Living for Today” in the Regional Office building of Vysočina Region. Actual trends in low-energy building industry were on the programme of Earth Day celebrations in the Healthy City of **Mladá Boleslav**, where seminar titled "Passive Houses – Houses of the Future" took place on 23rd April as a result of collaboration with Eco-centre Zvoneček Vraná nad Vltavou. Travelling exhibition IMAGINE, showing the perspectives of energy utilisation in European cities and the ways of how to prevent negative impacts of climate changes was to be seen in the Municipal Library of the Healthy City of **Kuřim** from 1st to 21st April.



Travelling exhibition on utilisation of energy in European cities was to be seen in Kuřim.

The Earth Day Campaign brings new trees and cleaned surroundings to Healthy Cities

A lecture presented by deputy Mayor of the Healthy City of **Brno**, Dr. Martin Ander on the subject of "Restoration of Municipal Parks and Public Greenery" took place as a part of Brno's Earth Days in the local Jiří Mahen Library. A public discussion with specialists under the title „How Brno's Dam Is Cleaned" took place a day earlier in White House on Žerotínovo Square. On 25th April, the Healthy City of **Hodonín** held the traditional Big Cleaning of Morava River Blind Branch, concluded by campfire and presentation of rewards to those who put their shoulder to the wheel. In the Healthy Municipality of **Křižánky** the pupils of the basic school of 22nd April cleaned the foot trail Česká Cikánka – Křižánky and a day later they cleaned the municipal centre in collaboration with other volunteers. Cleaning of Lázeňská Meadow situated in the city centre took place in collaboration with Improvement Club in the Healthy City of **Říčany** over the course of two April Saturdays. More than 30 citizens, out of which more than one half were children, took part in the event. A cleaning event also took place in the Healthy Municipality of **Bolatice**. Local citizens



Cleaning and planting of new trees took place with participation of young people in Bolatice on 24th April.

cleaned ditches, roads, brooks and public areas, renewed the v Důlku and u Velkého Kamene Springs. 27 lindens have been planted on Ratibořská Street and further hundreds of trees in adjacent areas. The citizens of the Healthy City of **Strakonice** participated in cleaning of the forest in Novohradské Mountains, the second year of Springs' Opening in Strakonice also took place. Environmental department of the Municipal Office Strakonice also participated in realisation of the project "From Spring to Estuary or Rivers, Rivulets, Brooks". Cleaning of Nivnička Brook took place on 19th April in the Healthy City of **Uherský Brod** as a part of "Let's Clean the World" Campaign. The campaign has been also joined by the Healthy City of **Ústí nad Labem**, where 70 volunteers cleaned the surroundings of Dobětický Brook. Big cleaning was also on the programme of pupils from basic school on Main Street in Ústí nad Labem – Mojžíř. Members of horse-riding club in the Healthy City of **Prague-Libuš and Písnice** for this time replaced bridles by rakes and brooms and got down to cleaning of Zatoňská Street surroundings. In the maternity centre Kuřátko they for a change organised an event "Mini-garden in Bloom" as a part of which children with parents planted boxes with flowers. With a helping hand of pupils from basic school Habrovany, the Healthy Micro-region **Drahanská Vrchovina** also commenced the spring cleaning and collection of waste. On 17th April, the community centre in Drnovice hosted a lecture of garden architect Markéta Flekalová dedicated to the subject "Greenery in Country Municipalities" that was connected with a visit of castle park.



Nivnička Brook in Uherské Hradiště has been cleaned within the event "Let's Clean the World" during the Earth Day.

Correct handling with waste helps the whole Earth and the place we live

Participants of the discussion dedicated to the subject of **how to recycle correctly**, organised by the Family and Maternity Centre on 25th April in the Healthy City of **Vsetín**, received precious information on the subject. The participants' questions during discussion were answered by a worker of Vsetín's Technical Services. The answers to questions like "what happens to a waste that we sort and deliver to scrapyards" were found by the inhabitants of the Healthy City of **Varnsdorf**, who attended the Open Day in Eco Service Varnsdorf. Forums dedicated to the subject of waste sorting, to its influence on municipal living environment and on its economy, are taking place in May in the Healthy City of **Adamov**. The inhabitants' ideas and observations will be further utilised for planning and improvement in community sphere. The Healthy City of **Přeštice** held an open day at the local water treatment plant. Between the April 14th and 25th, there were containers for all types of waste prepared in the scrapyards for citizens as a part of municipal cleaning. Přeštice have been currently preparing implementation of **bio-waste sorting system**. This issue was also a subject of April discussion forum on the municipal website. The results show that 79% of voters do intend to sort bio-waste.



The children, who came to celebrate the Earth Day in Vsetín's Panská Zahradka, could try playing non-traditional musical instruments made of various types of waste material.

The Healthy City of **Litoměřice** hosted from 5th March a series of lectures for children dedicated to the subject of waste sorting under the title "We Also Want to Help the Earth – We Sort Waste". It was for the whole month that an event focused on aluminium packaging collection took place under the title "Aluminium Globe". At the end of the month, the children and mothers of Maternity Centre used the collected packaging to create an Aluminium Globe, which they later handed in at the collection point. Library of the Healthy City of **Moravská Třebová** organised a children's flea market in castle arcades on the Earth Day occasion. With a permission of their parents, children sold or exchanged their old toys, sports equipment, books, collector's items or their own products. Children's products made of waste and ecological materials were to be seen at the event called "Eco-exhibition or the Sun Is Shining for Everyone" in the Healthy City of **Kopřivnice**. On the 25th April, multicoloured products

created by children in youth clubs and kindergartens were to be seen by the local community centre. In the Healthy City of **Třebíč** there was already the 5th year of event titled "May the City Shine Green or Who Does Not Sort, Does Not Jump". The chance to jump in an inflatable castle was a reward for those children with parents who brought old paper for recycling. A paper city created mostly from rolls for recycling has grown during the Earth Day on Masarykovo Square in the Healthy City of **Uherské Hradiště**. The gain from returned paper was handed over to Rescue Station for freely living animals in Buchlovce.



Children from kindergartens in Kopřivnice put their products of waste materials on display in front of community centre within the event "Eco-exhibition or the Sun Is Shining for Everyone".

Seeing of nature and friendly utilisation of natural products are the bases of environmental protection

The traditional walk route with scientific programme and six stations has been prepared for children in the Healthy City of **Jilemnice**. Elm tree, as a symbol of the city, has been ceremoniously planted in the castle park. Event participants also received flax seeds as a symbol of former traditional agricultural crop of the area. Children's participants of Earth Day celebrations in the Healthy City of **Orlová** were welcomed by a programme with 14 interactive activities including wax moulding, examples of vegetarian meals, tasting of bio-food-stuffs, processing of sheep wool, wheel spinning or identification of animals. The Healthy City of **Tábor** prepared a scientific route with various stations and rich programme for children of kindergartens and basic schools. The programme has been prepared in collaboration with the Centre of Environmental Education Fauna Protection. A part of Earth Day celebrations in the Healthy City of **Telč** also consisted of Open Day at Rescue Station for freely living animals. Its visitors could, among others, learn to identify species of birds by their calls. The Polabské Eco-centre in the Healthy City of **Poděbrady** prepared for children demonstrations of releasing recovered and handicapped animals back to nature. On this occasion, children learnt many interesting facts about animals, just like in case of event "Playfully about Farming Animals", prepared by the students of agricultural business at high trade school on Boučková Street. A forum about animals, titled "They Live with Us in the City", took place at the Iris Eco-centre blacksmith shop of the Healthy City of **Prostějov** on 16th April. Mr. Tomáš Papež informed the forum participants about animals we may come across in a garden, what a hedgehog's shelter look like or how to ensure preservation of animals' population in an urban environment. The Healthy City of **Lomnice nad Popelkou**

hosted Earth Day celebrations under the motto "Human and Animals". The celebrations included a drawing competition or presentation of society for protection of predatory birds.



Even before paper is recycled, it may still serve as a good building material, as it was the case on the Earth Day in Uherské Hradiště.

Exhibition of art works by school pupils on the subject of "Friendship with Earth" took place at the community centre in the Healthy City of **Hlučín**. Biology knowledge competition also took place at individual schools in the course of April. Within the framework of Earth Day celebrations held in the Healthy City of **Valašské Meziříčí** on 26th April there was an opening ceremony of new educational path situated in a precious area of Balinské Valley. Seven information boards have been installed across the path, their extension is already being planned. Educational trips made a significant part of the Earth Day programme in the Healthy City of **Štětí**. There was also planned a cycling trip to Kokořínsko natural preserve, a visit to Dolní Poohří natural park or a visit to Regional Museum in Mělník, connected with making of work sheets on the subjects of environmental protection in Kokořínsko natural preserve, on landscape changes and on human's influence on the environment.



Students in the field of agricultural business at high trade school on Boučkova Street prepared a programme titled "Playfully about Farming Animals" for children of kindergartens in Poděbrady.

Database BEST PRACTICE

Examples of best practice from other areas can be found in Database BestPractice – <http://www.good-practice.eu>.

LIST OF EVENTS

The Caravan of Europe visited the Czech Republic

A conference held on the occasion of three-day visit of the Caravan of Europe Project, dealing with industrial risks in large chemical companies and with possibilities of how to prevent them, took place on the Earth Day of 22nd April in the Healthy City of Litoměřice. The basic prevention principles are as follows: precaution, prevention and participation.



The city vice-mayor Mr. Marzio Marzorati also came to Litoměřice to share his personal experience of the Seveso accident.

Launch of the **Caravan of Europe Project** is connected with catastrophic explosion in a chemical factory Icmesa in the Italian municipality of Seveso in 1976. The Caravan of Europe therefore uses this event to raise awareness about possible risks presented by chemical factories even today, and does so in particular among representatives of cities and among broad public audience. It is for this reason that its representatives first headed from Italian city of Seveso to the Czech Republic, where not only the conference as such took place as a part of Earth Day celebration, but there were also two workshops and field trips to local chemical factories. From the Czech Republic the Caravan travelled to Lithuania and in June it is going to travel to Bulgaria. Overall, all 10 new EU member cities are going to take part in the project during these three stops and their message will travel all the way to the **European Parliament**. Common memorandum of all project actors should be signed on the occasion of 32nd accident anniversary in Seveso in October this year. The memorandum signatories share the idea of spreading information about this subject in their countries and cities and also that of adopting particular measures that utilise all of principles stated above. It was already at the conference in Litoměřice that an agreement of mayors of cities

of Litoměřice and Lovosice took place, stipulating that within the prevention framework these cities would realise a training of integrated rescue system, thus testing the preparedness not only on the part of professionals but also that of inhabitants living in the potentially threatened areas.

Representatives of cities of Lovosice and Litoměřice, representatives of companies Lovochemie and Glanzstoff, regional and municipal officials specialising in this issue, a representative of Slovak Regional

Environmental Centre and representatives of integrated rescue system met with project initiators of the Municipality of Seveso.

The meeting was jointly organised by the City of **Litoměřice**, Italian Municipality of **Seveso** and **Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic**.

More information about the project and about meeting in Litoměřice can be found at: <http://zdravemesto.litomerice.cz>.

All website references are generally in Czech language.

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(The photographs were provided by the archives of HCCZ Office and member cities, municipalities and regions)

This issue was supported by the Czech Environmental Fund.

