

## Tim Hortons cares about the environment

By **Laura Yorke**

Post Contributor

Walk five metres down any street and you're bound to find one – the dreaded Tim Hortons coffee cup, crushed on the ground.

Somebody carelessly dropped it or chucked it out

of a car window, unaware of the consequences on the environment and the unsightly appearance it creates.

Toronto Tim Hortons unveiled recycling bins for these cups in their stores on Nov. 3.

It's part of the city's new plan to cut down on the amount of food packaging that's sent to landfills. P.E.I. may be ahead of the curve.

Gordie Clow is general manager for Tim Hortons' Kent Street location in Charlottetown. On a busy day, he said his restaurant sells about 750 cups of coffee alone. Add to that hot chocolate, tea and cappuccinos and Clow said the number is closer to 1,000.

Clow said his restaurant has already implemented strategies to cut down on their waste.

"We do recycle. We put all our compost in our compost."

The compost mostly consists of coffee grinds, he said.

There are three major areas of sorting – compost, paper,



and cardboard.

Plastic lids are separated and put with the other garbage which cannot be recycled, said Clow.

In the lobby is a disposal unit for compost, waste and a bin for bottles and cans. Clow said people are very co-operative with the system.

"You'll see them stop... they separate their [lids from their] cup."

As for the infamous coffee cup on the ground outside, Clow said it bothers him to see this.

"I try to pick them up when I see them."

He said he can't understand why people don't just put the cups in the garbage.

"It's littering. We're brought up on the Island here to be more [conscious] of these things."

Clow said his restaurant also offers a 20 per cent discount to people who use a reusable mug, another strategy to cut down on waste.

*Laura Yorke is a journalism student at Holland College*

## Financial crisis could mean more suicides: Prof

By **Teresa Smith**

Canadian University Press

MONTREAL (CUP) – Insecurity caused by the effects of global financial slowdown could be behind a growing number of suicides, say experts.

Dr. Margaret Chan, the director general of the World Health Organization, says people should not be surprised if the number of suicides and mental disorders worldwide goes up as the severity of the financial crisis becomes clear.

However, at a meeting of mental health care professionals in Geneva, Switzerland in October, she warned her colleagues against blaming the crisis for unrelated suicides.

"Simply because the financial crisis exists doesn't mean we can assume a higher number of cases of depressed persons. It's more complicated than that," she said.

Margie Mendell, vice president of the School of Community and Public Affairs at Concordia, agrees.

"Suicide is not caused by the financial crisis itself, but maybe that's the tipping point.

"If you already have stress, excessive debt, precarious working conditions, and you've just been laid off, that's a pretty negative set of circumstances," she said.

Relatives of a Chicoutimi,

Quebec couple who made a murder-suicide pact after both lost their jobs before Christmas say the pact may have been related to finances.

A German billionaire committed suicide early in the new year after he lost millions on the stock market, and a businessman in California killed his mother-in-law, his wife, and their three children before turning the gun on himself.

The United States National Suicide Prevention Hotline reported their service has received 60 per cent more calls this year than last.

"Fear is the number one emotion we're hearing," a spokesperson for the hotline told Fortune Watch – a financial blog. "People are feeling hopeless and helpless because of the economic crisis, and many feel things aren't going to get better. Now, many of the calls are from people who have lost their home, or their job, or who still have a job but can't meet the cost of living."

Mendell says all of these factors can lead to growing insecurities and a high level of despair among the general population.

"It's not reserved for one group – everybody is hit by this," she said.

However, she says that only in extreme cases, when the person is already mentally unstable or vulnerable, would suicide be the outcome.

It's a question of how much

insecurity people can cope with, she says. If a person is afraid and they feel trapped, with no one to turn to, there are a number of coping mechanisms they can use, but if they're already pre-disposed to depression or anxiety, the addition of financial insecurity can be toxic.

Mendell says politicians and the media are partly to blame for the widespread insecurity.

"Politicians need to start an ongoing, intelligent conversation with the public," she said.

She stresses that sincere communication, outlining the details of the crisis in a clear, direct way is imperative at a time like this in order to lessen insecurities and give people some hope.

"There needs to be a de-jargonization about the financial crisis – if people understand what's going on, they won't feel so overwhelmed," she said.

She says the media should provide all the necessary information in a sober way, so people aren't terrified every time they pick up the paper or turn on the television.

It's not all doom-and-gloom, however. Mendell quotes an old Chinese proverb: "Out of crisis comes opportunity."

"With more information and education post-crisis, people will be less passive about their finances. They'll make sure they have the tools so this won't ever happen to them again," she said.