

MAGNA GREEN

'WHAT WE DO MATTERS'



MICHELLE DE MEEL, Magna director of global environmental compliance

Going green starts at Michelle de Meel's home in Pickering, Ontario and extends to her work guiding Magna people and plants around the world to be more environmentally conscious.

She recently swapped out every incandescent light in her home for more energy-efficient LEDs, and teaches her teenage children, Aiden and Lexi, about the importance of recycling. They participate in the zero-waste lunch program at their high school and the local green waste-management initiative.

"If I send them to school with an apple, the core comes home and then it goes into our green compost bin," said de Meel, the Magna director of global environmental compliance.

At Magna, de Meel said her mission is to "manage our operations to protect the environment and to promote green behaviors."

As at home, sometimes it's small things, such as skipping bottled water at meetings and using tap water in cafes instead.

"Little things add up to big changes," said de Meel, a civil engineer who once dreamed of being a doctor and "taking care of people instead of plants." But she said what she's doing now is "just as satisfying – and in some ways, even more so."

Greener initiatives are in the works for the company, in the form of three new Magna Environmental Principles that went into effect in early 2020 and focus on exceeding regulatory requirements. They include:

Waste management. The goal is for a minimum of 95 percent of all the trash generated by an operation to be diverted away from landfills. This includes finding suitable recycling alternatives, reusing materials and generating energy from waste.

Water conservation. The goal is for Magna to reduce water use by 10 percent over the next 2 years. Divisions are encouraged to create their own program, with guidance and training provided from corporate environmental specialists.

Air pollution controls. The goal is for each Magna location to put controls in place to minimize emissions. "Even if government regulations say everything is fine, we will strive to exceed regulations," de Meel said.

Magna is also getting greener by using the power of analytics and big data to better understand and predict overall trends within the company, and to target better ways to improve environmental performance.

"We must look at the big picture of climate change, keeping in mind how we behave locally to conserve resources," de Meel said. "Ultimately, we're just one planet and what we do matters."

