**Formal Report Proposal**

**To:** Erika Paterson

**From:** Timothy Goh

**Date:**  January 28, 2016

**Subject: Proposal for Determining the Feasibility of Implementing Hand Dryers at UBC washrooms**

**Introduction**

With 80% of infectious disease spread by hands, it is clear that washing our hands thoroughly is important. Drying of hands is equally if not more important as washing them to prevent the spread of contagious disease. Wet hands pick up contaminants more easily and can develop skin irritation. There are a few methods of hand drying that is suitable for modern day life. Among the most common methods are through the use of paper towels and hand dryers.

**Statement of problem**

The importance of washing hands is obvious; the benefits may be easily undone if we do not dry them properly. Paper towels have been overwhelmingly chosen as the preferred choice in most UBC’s washroom, as is evident from the lack of hand dryers. As part of UBC’s initiative to make the campus a little greener and sustainable, there is a clear advantage of using hand dryers in terms of environmental sustainability. Hand dryers have shown to emit lower greenhouse gases and is more energy-efficient than paper towels. Aside from the environmental impacts, hand dryers make the process of cleaning the washroom easier. Many places that utilizes paper towels complaint about the mess paper towels can create.

**Proposed solution**

One proposed solution is to switch from using paper towels to hand dryers at UBC washrooms. UBC would be able to operate more energy-efficiently and it makes the maintenance of the washroom easier. Students just wants to dry their hands quickly, completely and without damaging the environment. The easiest part of this solution is that the technology of making a good hand dryer is already there and it is up to us to utilize it.

**Scope**

To assess the feasibility of switching from using paper towels to hand dryers, I plan to pursue five areas of inquiry:

1. What is the cost to operate a hand dryer and paper towel respectively?
2. How effective in terms of cleanliness is drying of hands by a hand dryer compared to paper towel?
3. What are the environmental impacts of switching from paper towels to hand dryers?
4. How difficult would it be to switch from paper towels to hand dryers? What are the major hurdles?
5. How would students react to this change?

**Methods**

My primary data sources will include consultation with the UBC’s electric power and energy systems group alongside the UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS). The UBC AMS is in charged of developing and designing innovative projects that meets students’ sustainability goals. I will also be in contact with representatives from Dyson AirBlades to discuss the feasibility and cost of implementing my plan across the entire UBC campus. I also hope to conduct a survey among UBC students to see how students would react to this change.

My secondary sources will include publications on the uses of hand dryers and any reviewed journals on this topic.

**My Qualifications**

I have been utilizing both a hand dryer and paper towels on a regular basis for many years. In May of this year, I will receive my B.S. in Biology. I am familiar with technical jargons and the reason behind most objections to the use of hand dryers which are mainly due to hygienic concern.

**Conclusion**

Clearly, action is needed to move UBC towards a greener and more sustainable future. By addressing the five areas of inquiry mentioned earlier, I can determine the feasibility of implementing hand dryers in UBC washrooms. With your approval I will begin research at once.