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FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

2025 Canadian Word of the Year is “Maplewash”

TORONTO, ON (December 12, 2025) – After carefully reviewing the results of a national poll the Board of Directors of the Society for Canadian English (SCE) has determined that this year’s Canadian Word of the Year (CWOTY), the first of its kind, will be “**maplewash**”: the deceptive practice of making things look more Canadian than they actually are. In a close race, “maplewash” beat the popular runner-up, “elbows up,” 33.8% to 31.3%.

The earliest known citations for the word in the *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles* date back to 2016, but in the sense of glorifying all things Canadian while ignoring the country’s historical colonial and current social issues. The word appeared frequently in Canadian media in 2025 in its newer sense, as Canadian attitudes changed toward imported American goods and services, leading some companies to try to exaggerate their minimal or nonexistent Canadian content in order to make a sale.

The *Society for Canadian English* is a not-for-profit consortium including Editors Canada, the UBC Canadian Word Centre, and the Strathy Language Unit at Queen’s University. In addition to choosing a CWOTY, their main ongoing project is the development of a new general dictionary: the *Canadian English Dictionary (CED)*.

SCE Board chair and CED editor-in-chief John Chew said, “If there’s one thing we *don’t* need to maplewash, it’s the Canadian English language: it’s already a uniquely Canadian combination of World Englishes and homegrown Canadianisms, and not an American import.” SCE members John Chew, Prof. Stefan Dollinger, Emma Ferrett, Amir Ghorvei, and Dr. Anastasia Riehl are available for interviews to talk about the 2025 CWOTY.

Results graphic: www.canadianenglishdictionary.ca/media

Note: an earlier version of this release identified the winning word as the gerund “maplewashing”, the headword in the DCHP. CED prefers the more general “maplewash”.

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