Ministry of Energy Top Issues - September 20, 2016

From: "Kourakos, Georgina (ENERGY)" <georgina.kourakos@ontario.ca>
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Date: Tue, 20 Sep 2016 07:12:54 -0400

Good morning,

Here's what's making news:

- Not all rural hydro users will see reduction on bill - Northumberland Today.com
- Canadian Solar was looking to automate more of its Guelph plant, says local MP – Guelph Today
- Ontario Businesses Look for Innovative Ways to Reduce Energy Use – CKCO
- Ontario university uses simple idea to cut AC bill, carbon emissions – CTV News
- Six years of energy assault later, a byelection happens - Today's Farmer
- Wynne's energy rebate robs Ontario taxpayers - Simcoe Reformer
- We're simply paying too much for green energy - Sarnia Observer
- Tory MPs target Liberals' carbon-price approach - The Globe and Mail
- National price on carbon a crucial part of building policy to curb emissions: Hébert - thestar.com
- Campaign seeks to ban unsolicited door-to-door sales in home energy services - Brantford Expositor
- Woodstock forced to move sign from hydro poles - The Chatham Daily News

Not all rural hydro users will see reduction on bill
Northumberland Today.com
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A1 / Front
Section: News
Byline: Valerie Macdonald
Source: Northumberland Today

Not all rural Hydro One customers will benefit from a 12% reduction in their hydro costs in addition to the 8% HST rebate announced in the provincial Liberal Government's Throne Speech.

In an interview reacting to the Throne Speech, Northumberland-Quinte West MPP Lou Rinaldi said Hydro One customers in rural areas would receive a 12% reduction on top of the 8% cut effective Jan. 1, 2017 - making it a 20% hydro bill cut to these customers.

However, after a Telephone Road, Hamilton Township couple, Mel and Joan Curry contacted Rinaldi's local riding office and Northumberland Today, Rinaldi clarified that only 330,000 Zone 2 low density customers exist across Ontario - and of these only about 34,969 customers are in Zone 3A which stretches from Lake Ontario in the south to the Bancroft area in the north, west to the Simcoe Lake area and east to Brighton will get the 12% reduction.

All of Northumberland County is part of Zone 3A which includes urban areas, and high and medium density hydro customers. They will not benefit from the additional 12% reduction in hydro bills, just those in the low density area.

To determine if you are a low density customer, as identified by Hydro One, look on page two of your Hydro One bill "second line down beside the Electricty Charge (and there) it will say either low, medium or high density," Rinaldi's office stated in an e-mail after the Cobourg-area couple contacted the constituency office and this newspaper.

The Curry's said they looked at their bill and it states they are "medium" density and they are disappointed they are not going to get a further 12% cut in addition to the HST discount of 8%.

Their "main concern is that our MPP and possibly the provincial government as a whole are misleading many people into thinking that if they live in rural areas, they qualify," stated the Currys in an e-mail.

At the same time the number of Hydro One rural customers getting the added cut in cost was being clarified by MPP Rinaldi, a published report said these very rural customers are going to pay higher distribution charges, which will offset the savings.

"I welcome the opportunity to correct some of the misinformation that has been reported about the Ontario Energy Board's new policy on distribution charges," Rinaldi said. "This policy is not going to result in significant price changes. In fact, the majority of customers - about 60% - will not see any changes at all to their bill. And those who use a lot of electricity will see their bills decrease by a couple of dollars while those who use very little will see the opposite."

As an example, he said, here in rural Ontario the OEB estimates that households that use a lot of electricity will see their bills decrease by about $3/month. The change makes distribution charges more fair across Ontario and helps those households that use the most electricity. Often these are rural families that rely on electric heat - this policy is intended to help those families better manage their bills.

In a media release issued from Rinaldi's office after this interview, he reiterated in it that the low density Hydro One customers who will benefit from the 12% cut are not just residential, but commercial and agricultural.

Rinaldi also stressed that "reducing Ontario residential electricity bills by 8% on the amount before tax, (will be) an average savings of about $130 annually or $11 each month (and) providing eligible rural ratepayers with additional relief, decreasing total electricity bills by an average of $540 a year or $45 each month."

In addition, a change in program criteria, he said, allows more "businesses to reduce their bill by up to 34 per cent through the expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative."

Rinaldi summed up the situation this way: "the proposed additional support for rural ratepayers will, on average, reduce the delivery charge for rural consumers. In total, rural ratepayers will see save an average of $45 per month, or $540 a year. This will help ensure rural communities pay electricity charges even closer to those of other Ontario consumers. These steps are the latest in a series of measures the Ontario government has taken to help ease pressure on Ontario electricity consumers.

"Relief for hydro costs is something I have been advocating for all along and I am pleased we are taking steps in this direction." vmacdonad@postmedia.com Twitter.com/NT_vmacdonald

Canadian Solar was looking to automate more of its Guelph plant, says local MP
GuelphToday
2016-09-19
Byline: Tony Saxon

Guelph MPP Liz Sandals said she was aware that Canadian Solar was looking at shifting some of its work from manual labour to automated production lines.

But Sandals said she was not informed of any downsizing of the Guelph plant and has yet to receive any information from the company.

"I was not aware that layoffs were going to happen. I didn't have any advance notice," the MPP said Monday.

Guelph-based Canadian Solar, which at one time reported it employed 700 at its Speedvale Avenue West location, sent a memo to all employees Friday informing them of "a restructuring of our Canadian facilities."

The full text of that memo, acquired by Sandals and distributed to media, is at the bottom of this story.

It is not known how many workers in Guelph will be affected and Canadian Solar has thus far issued no comment or statement on the layoffs.

Guelph Mayor Cam Guthrie said Monday that he too has not heard anything from Canadian Solar.

"We heard about it through the press on the weekend," Guthrie said. "Staff have reached out to Canadian Solar to see if there's anything we can do to assist."

Sandals said she knew the company was looking at improving efficiencies in its manufacturing.

"They're also looking at some of the newer plants in the U.S. being 100 per cent automated. They're not 100 per cent automated so they're looking at some shifts on the line to automated from parts that are manual. I was aware of that," Sandals said Monday morning.

She added that demand for solar panels can be "cyclical" and it's not unusual for Canadian Solar hire to meet that demand then lay off workers when it slows.

"Certainly there's always an up and down of demand and they've always responded to that up and down in terms of hiring and then layoffs. In some ways, that cycle isn't a new issue for them," Sandals said.

Sandals said investments the province and Federal government have made in the past into Canadian Solar were "good investments."

"You have to look at what has happened through those investments. It has helped to build capacity of the manufacturing of solar panels in Ontario. We didn't have that before," Sandals said.

"I think it would be fair to say that they (Canadian Solar) met the expectations of those grants. That the economic conditions have shifted since they entered the fray and I think that they are trying to figure out how to respond to those new economic parametres," Sandals said.

Those parametres include a drop in the price Ontario pays for solar energy and the international trade rulings that ended Ontario-content regulations in the industry.'

"In order to continue to produce it they have to reduce their costs. The price Ontario pays for solar energy is way, way less than what they paid when they entered the market," Sandals said.

Guthrie said the city's Economic Development department is trying to find out more information.

"I'm always concerned with just one layoff, let alone more than one person," the Mayor said.

"I know our local economy remains strong through this, but that's of little comfort to the people I'm most concerned about, who are the workers at Canadian Solar."

Canadian Solar commons shares rose 20 cents in early trading on the NASDAQ stock exchange.

The memo issued to employees that Sandals provided reads as follows:

"To: All Employees

Re: CAMO restructuring announcement

Date: September 16, 2016

On September 15, Canadian Solar announced a restructuring of our Canadian facilities.

We will continue to focus on our Canadian solar farms, specialty projects and MV production, as well as microgrid and international operations. At the same time, there will be a streamlining and subsequent reduction of our PV module manufacturing operations to support our expansion of research and development projects, and specialty markets and customers.

The restructuring affects production team members, to whom we extend our gratitude and respect, and thank for their exemplary service.

A transition centre will be set up to answer questions and assist employees. Further details will be posted at the employee entrance.

Regards,

Gary Robertson

Vice President HR & Administration, Energy Group"

Ontario Businesses Look for Innovative Ways to Reduce Energy Use

Source: CKCO
Sep 19, 2016 6: 26 PM (18)

Anchor: As the cost of hydro continues to soar, Ontario businesses continue to look for innovative ways to lower their energy use. As CTV's Tyler Calver tells us, the University of Guelph is the first school in Ontario that has built a system to reduce their air conditioning bill by almost 40 percent.

Reporter: At first glance, this tower looks pretty ordinary, but inside is 22 million liters of cost-saving water.

John Kuri, General Manager of Energy Services: Imagine something like a big rechargeable battery.

Reporter: It's called the thermal energy storage facility. Massive insulated steel tanks stores cold water, which is used to run the university's entire air conditioning system.

Kuri: We're generating all the cooling requirements for the university at night, storing all that cold water in the tank, and then during the daytime when the electricity is at its peak and most expensive, we're drawing from that cold water storage tank and cooling the university.

Reporter: Think of it as doing your laundry at night. With the bulk of the cooling done at off peak hours, University of Guelph reduced its energy usage this summer by 7 megawatts, a savings of $2.5 million on its power bill.

Franco Vaccarino, president, University of Guelph: It's huge. And in many ways the power of this technology in its simplicity and it's really representative of the kind of future of this kind of innovation.

Reporter: The Minister of Energy says the power savings will benefit the entire province.

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: That 7 megawatt during peak power, peak power times, allows the province not to actually look at having to invest in billions of dollars of building, you know, new generating facilities.

Reporter: Project cost $15 million. The province picked up a third of the cost through its green energy initiative.

We're taking advantage of that clean energy rather than during the day when Ontario has to supplement its base load electrical with natural gas-fired gas plants.

Reporter: Tyler Calver, CTV news, Guelph.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

Ontario university uses simple idea to cut AC bill, carbon emissions
CTV News
2016-09-20
Byline: Josh Dehaas, CTVNews.ca Writer

An Ontario university has cut its greenhouse gas emissions -- not to mention its air conditioning bill -- using a relatively simple technology.

The University of Guelph built a 30-metre-high tank that cools 22 million litres of water each night. The water is piped around campus during the day, cooling classrooms, offices and labs.

The thermal energy system cost about $15 million to build but the university says it already has saved about $2.5 million on its electricity bills since the system went online earlier this summer.

John Kuri, who works for the energy consultancy MCW, said the savings come partly from the fact that it takes less energy to cool things at night, and partly from the fact that Ontario electricity is cheaper from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

It’s cheaper during those so-called “off-peak hours” because Ontario is forced to supplement its nuclear and hydroelectric sources during the day by burning natural gas, which creates climate-changing carbon emissions.

At night, the energy is basically “emissions-neutral” Kuri said. That means the university’s new system is also helping to slow climate change.

Ontario Minister of Energy Glenn Thibeault, who toured the facility Monday, told reporters that innovations like these allow the province to avoid spending “billions of dollars” to build new nuclear plants.

It’s one of the reasons the Ontario government chipped in $5.8 million toward the cost. Students also contributed, through a special fund that’s collected alongside tuition fees.

According to Kuri, thermal cooling systems are relatively common in the southern U.S., but Guelph’s is the first of large-scale system of its kind in Ontario.

Six years of energy assault later, a byelection happens
Today's Farmer
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A7
Section: Opinion
Byline: Kevin Marriott
Source: Today'S Farmer

Dear editor: Rural people in the Province of Ontario have been under assault by the provincial government for about six years now since the Green Energy Act (GEA) of 2009 was enacted.

The encompassing legislation was the first ever of its kind to take away a municipality’s democratic right, in this case the right to say no to industrial wind turbines. However this would not be the only right that the GEA would end up taking away from not only rural but all of Ontario and that right is affordable electricity.

Time of use electricity rates were introduced to encourage everyone to conserve during the peak hours of the day in an attempt to even out consumption. Great for the average homeowner who can save by doing their heavy electricity chores at night or early in the morning. Agriculture, unfortunately, is unable to divert chores to off-peak hours for many reasons, depending on the sector. We have also had to endure an even higher rate of increase in electricity because on-peak rates have risen faster than off-peak rates since 2006. A seemingly cruel joke, considering time of use was supposed to “help” us.

One last issue I will raise with respect to electricity is the much higher cost of delivery for rural Ontario. Why should rural Ontario pay double for delivery when most electricity is actually delivered to the GTA from rural Ontario with the only exception of that power generated at Niagara Falls?

I have had letters in this column before, complaining about the treatment of rural Ontario when it comes to OMPF, with these funds reduced by 35% in the past 3 years, which have in turn put pressure on Municipal councils to reduce services or raise taxes by the same 35%. Once again some urban centres like Windsor benefited from the shift of OMPF grants away from rural taxpayers. There have been many delegations to Ministry of Finance and they constantly deny these shifts were politically motivated. Where do you think the previous Minister of Finance was from that enacted this shift of OMPF grants? That would be the city of Windsor!

It has been so disheartening to see this much disrespect for rural Ontario, with the GTA being the only area that matters to this government, even though agriculture is the number one industry in Ontario.

If I could ask the Premier just one question it would be: What about the thousands of people who did vote Liberal in those Conservative-held seats?

Our complaints have never been addressed when we have met at OGRA/ROMA and we get the feeling this government has written off rural Ontario. Well it seems the Premier has started to take notice with the loss of the Scarborough-Rouge River by-election on Sept. 1, and by admitting that the cost of electricity was something heard often in the campaign.

This is proof that the treatment of rural Ontario this past six years has been punishment for not sending Liberal MPPs to Queen’s Park. Whatever happened to once the election is over, everyone is treated the same?

It took the loss of one of their beloved GTA seats to finally get the Premiers attention with her statement: “electricity is an urgent issue for the Minister of Energy”.

The much higher onpeak cost and the doubling of delivery costs ends up making our electricity bills 3 times that of 8 years ago. This past summer, with my drying of wheat at harvest, I was able to generate my own electricity with a diesel tractor; it was cheaper than using electricity from the grid. I highly recommend every farmer investigate this for their own individual operations, and show this arrogant government that there are alternatives. They have ignored our pleas to stop subsidizing wind turbines by billions of dollars, and then turn around and export the electricity at a loss!

Kevin Marriott Mayor, Township of Enniskillen

Wynne's energy rebate robs Qntario taxpayers
Simcoe Reformer
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A4
Section: Opinion
Byline: Jim Merriam
Source: Simcoe Reformer

Premier Kathleen Wynne and her government just don’t get it.

Instead of doing something meaningful about the crisis brought on by the high cost of power in Ontario, Wynne and crew threw the people of the province a bone in last week’s throne speech.

The speech was promoted as a reset for the government, to show its new-found concern for the people suffering under the highest power rates in North America.

Instead ,the eight per cent tax rebate on electricity bills was nothing but cynical tokenism made to look like action.

The reduced tax will save the average household about $130 a year. At least some rural ratepayers will save an additional $540 a year.

None of which does diddly to address the root of the problem.

The energy file has been a disaster for decades in Ontario, made worse when the Mike Harris Conservatives split Ontario Hydro into segments, increasing pricey administrations and overweening bureaucracies.

Then along came the Dalton McGuinty Liberals in 2003 who have made things much, much worse.

The price of electricity in peak hours has risen more than 70 per cent in the past decade, largely because of complex and draconian Green Energy Act initiatives.

The fact the eight-per-cent rebate is an insulting pittance for folks who are hundreds of dollars short in paying their bills each month, isn’t the worst part of this nightmare.

The whole exercise is like putting a dab of salve on a life-threatening tumour. It’s treating the symptom while the disease continues to ravage the body, which in this case is the province.

We pay exorbitant rates to renewable energy producers who help to generate more electricity than we need and then discount it deeply, way below cost, when other jurisdictions take it off our hands - all the while gouging the people who supposedly matter most, the residents of Ontario.

Now for the real kicker. The eight per cent rebate will come from the province’s tax base, to the tune of a cool $1 billion a year.

Since we’ve been running deficits for years, the interest on extra billion the province has to put on the credit card will be paid by the same folks who got the rebate.

In other words, the government’s not robbing Peter to pay Paul, it’s robbing Peter to pay Peter. And every taxpayer in the province is Peter.

In addition, the throne speech also included the proposed creation of 100,000 new child care spaces over five years.

Oh yes, but Wynne and company claim still to be on track to balance the books in 2017-18 in spite of this year’s deficit of some $4.3 billion.

If she keeps giving away goodies to win votes, the deficits will keep adding to the provincial debt that now stands at an incredible $307 billion. It is forecast to rise to $350 billion.

It's anybody's guess how the debt ever will be paid off. Certainly the money won't come from the taxes collected from workers who actually produce something on a daily basis.

Since the Liberals took power in 2003, some 347,000 manufacturing jobs have disappeared in Ontario.

Even more have been created - a total of 368,000 - that in one way or another are paid from the public purse.

This is not sustainable. Private enterprise has to be attracted to Ontario to help pay for this overwhelming level of government.

In a province where high power rates are keeping investment away and driving residents into the poor house that's not about to happen. jmerriam@bmts.com

We're simply paying too much for green energy
Sarnia Observer
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A4
Section: Opinion
Byline: Santo Giorno
Source: Sarnia Observer

Regarding the letter "Base comments on facts, not fancy" (Sept. 12, Sarnia Observer) The author suggests that comments regarding the price of electricity for renewables should be based on "facts, not fancy". So let's take a closer look at the facts.

The Global Adjustment (GA) is the difference between the wholesale price of electricity and the price paid to the generators.

The "first Global Adjustment Review" that the author refers to was issued in January 2014, and only covers data up to September 2012. At that time, wind and solar generation was maximized while nuclear and hydro were curtailed to give wind and solar preferential access to the grid.

In 2012, hydro output was 22 per cent, wind was three per cent, biomass and solar combined was less than one per cent. Hydro gets very little from the global adjustment; so much of the 17 per cent GA cost for wind/solar/hydro was due to wind's three per cent output, often only available when not needed under surplus conditions. Nuclear, with 56.4 per cent of the output, available whenever needed, accounted for 42 per cent of the GA. Each percent of wind output resulted in about five per cent of the cost in the GA, compared with 0.75 per cent of the cost for each percentage point of nuclear.

Curtailment of nuclear and hydro continues today in order to give wind and solar priority access to the grid. Even with a limited curtailment of wind, there were 472 nuclear reductions and two nuclear shutdowns in 2015 due mainly to surplus wind generation. That represents the loss of 897,000 megawatt hours of low-cost electricity, enough for about 100,000 homes for the year. Unlike wind and solar, this electricity is reliable with no need for any fossil fuel backup when the wind stops blowing or the sun stops shining.

I suggest that the author also look at the facts in section 4.3.2 of the 2015 Auditor-General of Ontario report titled "Excessive Prices Paid for Renewable Energy", with particular attention to the subsections titled: Ontario Still Paying Too Much for Renewables Renewable Energy Not Procured Competitively

Renewable Energy Not the Most Cost-effective Way to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Renewable Energy Contributes Less to Meeting Peak Demands While Costing More The AG's report highlights that the McGuinty/Wynne government has used ministerial directives, often against the advice of its technical agencies, to hand out 20-year contracts to developers at rates twice as high as in the United States for wind, and three and a half times as high for solar.

Ontario consumers will pay $9.2 billion more for wind, solar and biomass contracts awarded to developers since the Green Energy Act was passed than we would have under the previous bidding process, and with questionable environmental benefits since the intermittent wind and solar sources require frequent backup by gas generators.

The issue is not the use of renewables; the real issue is that the government continues to squander an obscene amount of our money on a poorly planned, and an even more poorly executed, approach to the use of renewables.

Energy projects should only be approved based on sound technical, environmental, and financial reasons, not by ministerial directives based on ideology.

Santo Giorno

Camlachie

Tory MPs target Liberals' carbon-price approach
The Globe and Mail
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A4
Section: News
Byline: SHAWN McCARTHY

Conservative MPs returned to Parliament on Monday with an attack on the Liberal government’s plan for a national carbon price, saying it runs roughshod over the provinces and would hurt the Canadian economy.

As the Commons resumed sitting after the summer recess, Environment Minister Catherine McKenna defended the government’s approach, saying she has consulted widely with provincial colleagues and noting that Canada‘s four most populous provinces have already introduced carbon pricing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“We understand the environment and the economy go together,” Ms. McKenna said during Question Period Monday. “We understand and know that carbon pricing is the most efficient way to reduce emissions and foster innovation.”

However, Conservative MPs insisted the Liberal plan would add to pain on the Prairies, where the economy is suffering from a two-year slump in crude prices.

The Environment Minister confirmed on the weekend that Ottawa will impose a minimum carbon price in provinces that don’t have one or fail to meet the federal minimum standard, though she offered no details on how the policy would be enacted.

Alberta and Saskatchewan rely heavily on oil exports, and on coal to fuel their electricity systems. Alberta’s NDP government has introduced a climate plan that includes carbon pricing, while Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall opposes any effort to impose a broad carbon tax.

Nova Scotia also opposes the Liberals’ plan for a national minimum carbon price.

In Ottawa on Monday, Conservative interim leader Rona Ambrose said her party favours “regulation on industry rather than taxes on Canadians” when it comes to climate policy. However, the former Conservative government never acted on its long-standing promise to impose regulations on large industrial emitters, including the oil sands sector, which has been the country’s fastest growing source of GHG emissions.

Conservative House Leader Candice Bergen said a federal carbon price would particularly hurt rural and northern Canadians who have farther distances to travel. B.C. MP Mark Strahl said any plan to increase British Columbia’s existing carbon tax would drive away investment, particularly proposals to invest in export facilities for liquefied natural gas.

Alberta MP Jason Kenney noted his province is suffering a severe economic downturn and argued that “the worst possible thing [would be] to hike prices and impose new taxes on everything.”

Mr. Kenney is preparing to resign his federal seat next month to run for the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party on a mandate to unite conservative opposition parties. Campaigning in the province this summer, he regularly attacked the NDP government’s carbon tax plan, which kicks in on Jan. 1, 2017.

In responding to Mr. Kenney on Monday, Ms. McKenna said carbon pricing is a market-based system that is considered the most efficient way to reduce GHG emissions.

While B.C. and Alberta have introduced carbon taxes, Ontario and Quebec are pursuing a capand-trade approach that uses a carbon market to, in effect, set a price on greenhouse gas emissions.

As Conservatives attacked the Liberals' plan for a national floor price on carbon emissions, NDP interim leader Tom Mulcair criticized the government's reluctance to set a more ambitious target than the one adopted by the former Harper government, which pledged Canada would reduce GHG emissions by 30 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030.

"Does the minister think that is change, serving up the Conservative plan with a smile?" Mr. Mulcair demanded.

Ms. McKenna said emissions had been rising under the previous Conservative regime, making it challenging to meet the 2030 target. "What Canadians expect is real action and we are going to deliver real action, with the provinces and territories, with indigenous leaders, with business, with youth, with all Canadians."

National price on carbon a crucial part of building policy to curb emissions: Hébert
thestar.com
Tue Sep 20 2016
Section: News | Toronto Star

Byline: Chantal Hébert(https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.h_bert_chantal.html)
With Green Party leader Elizabeth May leading the charge, there will be no lack of Canadians disappointed by the Liberal decision to stick with Stephen Harper's targets for reducing carbon emissions.

After all, to use a term that was dear to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in his days in opposition, he has the social licence not only to raise those targets but just as importantly to place part of the burden of mitigating climate change unto the shoulders of consumers.

According to an Abacus poll done last month, less than one third of Canadians oppose the introduction of a carbon tax (www.thestar.com) as part of a larger climate change strategy. An overwhelming majority of non-Conservative voters support or could accept such a measure.

It is a rare tax that finds favour with a majority in the public especially on the heels of decade-long concerted federal effort to vilify the concept. According to Abacus, the rhetoric expended by Harper's government on making a carbon levy politically toxic even fell on the deaf ears of almost four in 10 Conservative voters.

It is, of course, easier to support a tax in theory than to pay for it in practice. Still, the experience of British Columbia where a carbon tax was introduced almost a decade ago has been that the political cost of such a measure - at least initially - is not exorbitant.

So, given all of the above, is the Trudeau government missing out on a once-in-a-political-lifetime opportunity to go hard on carbon emissions? Not necessarily.

Canada has a long way to go to meet its international commitments on carbon emissions reduction. The existing targets are widely expected to fall short of the mark. But meeting them could still be a significant stretch.

It is hard to reach for the sky in the absence of a ladder.

The introduction of a national price on carbon is a crucial part of the building of a Canadian policy infrastructure sturdy enough to achieve steady progress on curbing carbon emissions. This is a policy for which governments will need public support for the long haul.

The popular consensus on carbon pricing was not born out of thin air. The fact that there is wide provincial support for the concept is an essential part of the mix.

In particular, the election of an NDP government in Alberta has altered the alignment of the stars.

It was not so long ago that the mention of a federal move to put a price on carbon was enough to send Alberta's political class to the barricades in protest against a purported raid on the province's energy resources reminiscent of the National Energy Program of a previous Trudeau era.

That was until NDP Premier Rachel Notley (www.thestar.com) brought the province inside the tent. Like most other provinces including the three most populous ones, Alberta has put a price on carbon. But like its sister provinces of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, it is not looking to see that price increase precipitously in a sluggish economy.

Keeping Harper's targets is not the same as sticking with the Conservatives' climate change plan. By maintaining the existing targets, Trudeau's Liberals maximize the chances that the transition to a national price on carbon (complete with an escalator clause) is relatively seamless.

Given a choice between setting goals that may or may not be attainable at a prohibitively high political (and economic) cost, or putting in place the conditions for meeting more ambitious ones on a consensual federal-provincial basis over time, the latter should logically take precedence.

A note in closing: consensual is not synonymous with unanimity. There will be some provincial pushback to an escalating national price on carbon, most notably from Saskatchewan. But in the House of Commons, the Trudeau government will not lack for cover both for keeping the existing targets for emissions reductions and for putting a national price on carbon.

The Conservatives had a decade to drive a stake through the heart of the concept of a carbon tax and it is still alive and kicking. They are now left to argue that their Liberal successors should not do what it takes to meet targets set by their former government. As long as Notley remains on side with Trudeau's approach, the federal New Democrats stand to be in a similarly awkward position. Calling for more stringent targets would put them on the wrong side of the party's only provincial government.

Who's that knocking on door?; Campaign seeks to ban unsolicited door-to-door sales in home energy services
Brantford Expositor
Tue Sep 20 2016
Page: A1 / Front
Section: News
Byline: Vincent Ball
Source: Expositor Staff

Overly aggressive door-to-door salespeople in the home energy services sector continue to be a problem, says a Brantford police spokesperson.

“We get calls almost on a daily basis from residents who have had to deal with pushy salespeople who try to force their way into homes,” Const. Laura Collier said Monday.

“We always tell residents that they don't have to allow these people in and they must leave if they are told to leave. If they don't, then call us right away.”

For every complaint received from a resident, there are probably a couple of others who don't bother to report pushy salespeople to police, said Collier.

“We always like people to call us, if they encounter a really aggressive individual,” she said.

Anyone selling door-to-door must have a proper municipal permit. Without the permit, the salesperson must stop and risks being fined, she said.

“We can talk to the person, check to see if they have the proper permit and we can advise other people in the neighbourhood about what's going on. By calling us, a resident can protect themselves and help protect their neighbours.”

Collier said that residents also should ask for photo identification and get the name of the salesperson and business. At no time, should residents share personal information, including utility bills, she added.

The pushy sales tactics have said. See DOOR-TO-DOOR A2 become such a problem across the province that that more than 20 municipalities, including Brantford, are calling on the provincial government to ban unsolicited door-to-door sales in the home energy sector. including furnaces, water heaters, HVAC and water filtration systems. Other municipalities calling for the ban include Mississauga, Toronto, Markham, Oakville, Pickering, Pelham, Pickering, Oshawa, Welland and Kenora.

Brantford city councillors unanimously voted last May in favour of a resolution calling on the province to take action. The motion was brought to council by Ward 4 Coun. Cheryl Antoski.

“I think it's very important that the province act on this and clearly so do a lot of other municipalities,” Antoski said Monday. “However, it might not be as cut and dried as we'd like. It may be difficult to brush every company with the same broad stroke because not all are acting in predatory manner.”

She noted that governments must act to protect citizens.

“In this case, it is most often our more vulnerable citizens who suffer the consequences of unscrupulous sales tactics,” said Antoski. She said that it is unfortunate that a ban may adversely affect some local businesses who use door-todoor sales.

“The truth is, the person on the other side of the door isn’t always the friendly neighbour or the local business person trying to help in some way as it once was,” Ward 5 Coun. Brian Van Tilborg said that he advises residents to tell unwanted door-to-door salespeople to leave their properties. If they don’t, call police, he said.

“It comes in waves, dozens of them bused into a neighbourhood and then staying in town from three days to a week,” Van Tilborg said. “They methodically target a neighbourhood with their high-pressure and misleading techniques.

“Many try to lead people on that they are there on behalf of a municipality-owned corporation or because of a provincial regulation.”

Van Tilborg said he often gets calls from constituents asking why the city is going door-to-door.

“Don’t give them any invoices or billing information,” he said.

“Don’t let them enter your home, basement, kitchen or walk around your premises.”

Meanwhile, an Ontario resident who was a victim of a door-to-door home service seller has launched a campaign called Stop the Knocks to support calls for a provincial ban.

Residents can support the call for the ban in a couple of ways. They can sign a petition at Change. org (chn.ge) or by liking the ‘Stop the Knocks’ on Facebook (www.facebook. com/StopTheKnocks) or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/StopTheKnocks).

Organizers of the campaign are hoping the provincial government will address the concerns now that the legislature has resumed sitting.

Woodstock forced to move sign from hydro poles
The Chatham Daily News
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Source: Woodstock Sentinel-Review

The signs are coming down - and then going back up again. The City of Woodstock is in the process of having local street signs - think parking rules, bus stop notices, big red stop signs - removed from their spots on hydro poles in the city. It’s a requirement that was spelled out in the sale of Woodstock Hydro to Hydro One. “It was part of the conditions of the sale,” said city engineer Harold de Haan. “(Hydro One‘s) policy is that they do not allow street signs. .. on their hydro poles.” Hydro One said that condition is about protecting workers.