

Thursday, March 9 News

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Premier

Fair Hydro Plan Echo Event – Premier Kathleen Wynne was in Guelph today to highlight how Ontario is lowering electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for households and small businesses, as part of a significant system restructuring that will address long-standing policy challenges and ensure greater fairness. Premier Wynne visited two small businesses in Guelph that will benefit from Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan. Starting this summer, small businesses that receive a time-of-use bill similar to residential customers will be eligible for the 25 per cent cut. As a result, this plan is expected to help up to half a million small businesses and farms. People with low incomes and those living in eligible rural communities will receive even greater reductions to their electricity bills. As part of this plan, rate increases over the next four years would be held to the rate of inflation for everyone. These measures include the eight per cent rebate introduced in January, and build on previously announced initiatives to deliver broad-based rate relief on all electricity bills. Taken together, these changes will deliver the single-largest reduction to electricity rates in Ontario's history. Reducing electricity costs for households and small businesses is part of Ontario's plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives. – **Guelph – 8:30 AM**

Province-Wide

HOUSING – Minister Ballard – Supportive Housing Investment – Ontario is increasing its investment in housing assistance and supports across the province to help up to 6,000 families in need remain permanently housed – a major step forward in its goal to end chronic homelessness by 2025. Chris Ballard, Minister of Housing and Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, was at the Native Women's Centre Mountain View in Hamilton today to announce the new investment. Twenty per cent of the new funding will be dedicated to supporting Indigenous people. The new supports such as counselling, addictions services, and life skills training, will help people who are homeless and experiencing addictions, or living with mental illness or disabilities, to obtain housing and remain permanently housed. The funding will allow municipalities and Indigenous organizations to deliver ongoing supportive housing programs that best meet the needs of chronically homeless people in their communities. This investment builds on the three-year funding for supportive housing that was previously announced in March 2016 as part of the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy update. In the coming days, the province will launch a selection process to choose a number of municipalities to participate in the program, and will work with Indigenous partners to select organizations that will deliver these services for Indigenous people. Working with Indigenous partners to end chronic homelessness by 2025 is one of many steps on Ontario's journey of healing

and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. – **Hamilton – 1:45 PM**

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION – Volunteer Service Awards – Ontario is recognizing more than 11,000 volunteers at 55 Volunteer Service Awards ceremonies taking place in 40 communities across the province from March to June 2017. The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards recognize adult volunteers for five to 65+ years of continuous service to an organization and youth volunteers for two or more years of continuous service. Each volunteer will receive a certificate and customized trillium pin to recognize the vital role they play in our communities. Among their many contributions, volunteers:

- Help out at local schools, hospitals and seniors' centres
- Take their neighbours to appointments and help newcomers settle
- Plant trees and raise funds for a variety of causes
- Play a vital role in the governance of Ontario's non-profit sector.

As Canada and Ontario commemorate their 150th anniversaries in 2017, volunteers remind us of the important role civic responsibility plays in building a strong, caring and inclusive society. – **Bulletin Only – 10:00 AM**

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS – Covered Agriculture Supports – **Bulletin Only – 12:00 PM ** Not Yet Available ****

Local

No announcements planned

FYI

Federal Finance Minister Bill **Morneau** will join the CEOs of Canada's five big banks for an announcement to support Canadian business – **Toronto – 9:45 AM**

Patrick Brown Speaks To Toronto Region Board Of Trade – **Toronto – 12:30 PM**

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