

Daily News - November 15

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MINISTER NEWS

CBC.ca: [Power to keep flowing this winter to people with unpaid bills](#)

"The bad thing is if people think this is just a free pass to not pay their hydro bill all winter long," says Wendy Watson, the communications director at Greater Sudbury Hydro. Watson says while they can't disconnect customers during the winter, they can continue charging interest on unpaid bills. She recommends that Sudburians contact hydro to find out about the numerous programs designed to help people struggling to make ends meet.

CityNews.ca: [Ontario hydro customers can no longer be disconnected for not paying bill](#)

Beginning Wednesday, hydro customers can't be disconnected for non-payment of their bill. The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) says utilities also are required to reconnect homes currently disconnected for non-payment without charge

LOCAL NEWS

TheSudburyStar.com: [PCs committed to \\$40M Sudbury centre: Crowder](#)

Crowder encouraged everyone in Northern Ontario who wants to see better health care services to sign the petition at www.neonow.ca, and said that he will be dropping off the signatures at Sudbury MPP Glenn Thibeault's office... NEO Kids' board applied for funding from the Liberal government in 2015, but their application was rejected. More recently, Thibeault indicated there was movement on funding, but Sudbury families have been left waiting, according to Crowder.

BlackBurnNews.com: [Windsor Essex Reacts To Fall Economic Update](#)

The update says those bills have gone down by 25% on average, but Amherstburg resident Libby Keenan, who operates a horse-training business, says she is not seeing it that way. "I haven't seen my bill change very much," says Keenan. "I was told that the delivery would go

down considerably and it did not." Keenan's previous criticism of rising hydro rates in Ontario caught the attention of Premier Wynne, who invited Keenan to meet with her to discuss the matter.

Sudbury.com: [Tax cuts for business, more LTC beds part of financial update](#)

"It's not a one for one," Energy Minister and Sudbury MPP Glenn Thibeault said Tuesday about the tax cut. "The minimum wage piece is something that we recognize as a government that needs to happen in this province. Precarious work, the below living wage for people, it obviously needs to change. Our economy is doing well. That's part of what the economic statement is talking about. But it's not being felt in all places."... "When you're looking at that small business rate cut from 4.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent, that's a 22 per cent reduction and would bring our tax rate to among the lowest in all the G7 countries."... The province also plans to add another 5,000 long-term care beds by 2020, part of its promise to add 30,000 more beds over the next decade. Thibeault wasn't sure how many of the beds would come to Sudbury. "It was only recently announced ... but we all know we have an ageing population," [Thibeault] said. Locally, Thibeault said the money to finish four-laning Highway 69 was confirmed by Sousa. "Highway 69 funding is again in there, reiterating that the funding is there for the completion of the next 68 kilometres," [Thibeault] said. "I know the importance of that for our community. I was happy to see those dollars are continuing to be there." ...Thibeault took issue with Lysyk's conclusions. "This is an accounting dispute," [Thibeault] said. "We have our accountants who reviewed the plan. These were third-party, world leading experts when it comes to accounting. And they say our accounting matches that of the Canadian Public Service Accounting standards. "KPMG, (Ernst & Young), Deloitte all agree that the practice we put in place actually follows the accounting practices of the Canadian public sector accounting system." And Thibeault said the estimate was based on an interest rate of five per cent, which is higher than what the market is showing. "The number that she was using, the \$4 billion, was a point in time back in March that the financial accountability officer used, saying this is what the interest will be on the new OPG Trust. We're saying that was a point in time. He used five per cent as an interest rate. "OPG, went they put out an issue to a bond market about three weeks ago, they got 3.3 per cent. So it's going to be significantly lower than that." While not agreeing on the OPG Trust issue, Thibeault said his government is still committed to working with here. "Ninety-nine point nine per cent of the time, we agree with the auditor and implement a lot of the recommendations. But this is another accounting dispute we have with the auditor, just as we did in the past with the pension piece."

Recorder.ca: [Hydro costs hurting BGH care: Group](#)

"How is Brockville General Hospital expected to manage their budget when electricity bills are rising by hundreds of thousands of dollars, despite reduced consumption?" CTF Ontario director Christine Van Geyn said Tuesday in a prepared statement. Vlacholias said such things as LED lighting and control systems will improve energy efficiency so that, while the hospital will have more square footage, the cost per square foot will be less. Vlacholias said the government has done a good job recognizing the hospital needs additional support. But Leeds-Grenville MPP Steve Clark said the CTF data are another indictment of the Liberal government of Premier Kathleen Wynne. "It just shows the stress that hospitals have been put under," said Clark. Officials in the premier's office referred questions on the matter to the office of Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault. Officials in that ministry had yet to respond at press time. (UPDATE: In a later email to The Recorder and Times, Colin Nikolaichuk, a spokesman for Thibeault, said the CTF is "cherry-picking from hospital hydro bills, while failing to see the bigger picture on both the healthcare and energy systems in Ontario." Please check this website later

Wednesday for more coverage.)

SUDBURY ISSUES

Innovation: [Medical innovation from the north](#)

Flosonics Medical opened its doors Nov. 10 to celebrate their progress on the FloPatch, and funding from FedNor and several competitions to get their new product to the prototype phase. Nickel Belt Liberal MP Marc Serré announced the project has received \$200,000 from FedNor's Northern Ontario Development Program, which he explained helps develop business growth and facilitate innovation.

Mining: [Glencore, teachers to create mine royalty company](#)

The Swiss commodity giant will bring royalty agreements from about 10 mines, while Ontario Teachers' will contribute about \$350 million in capital to allow the company to buy further royalty streams from other projects. Glencore and Ontario Teachers' will each have a 50 per cent stake in the new vehicle and the deal is expected to close in the next few weeks, the people said, asking not be to identified as the talks are confidential.

Indigenous: [Federal government invests \\$2.6 M for Atikameksheng Anishnawbek training program](#)

The government adds the people in the program will focus on environmental aspects of mining, mine closure and rehabilitation of closed mines. The program is aimed at people who are not already enrolled in post-secondary education or training.

Legal: [Family of deceased paramedic disappointed with Ornge ruling](#)

A mother who lost her son in a helicopter crash on the James Bay Coast four years ago is disappointed Ornge Air Ambulance has been cleared of wrongdoing. The crown alleged Ornge was negligent for failing to provide night-vision goggles to the two pilots. The 2013 crash killed all four men on board, including Captain Don Filliter of Skead, paramedic Dustin Dagenais of Kapuskasing, paramedic Chris Snowball of Burlington and First Officer Jacques Dupuy of Otterburn-Park, Que.