

Afternoon Energy Media Summary - March 27, 2017

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Date: Mon, 27 Mar 2017 15:01:25 -0400

Good Afternoon,

Here is a roundup of the day's news:

- Attrition, cap and trade take centre stage at district CFFO meeting – *Chatham This Week*
- NDP's Krmpotich hearing all about skyrocketing hydro bills on the doorstep – *Sault Online*
- Earth Hour 2017 results in a 4% drop in electricity: Alectra Utilities – *CTV Barrie*
- From the Park – Rent Increases – *Wawa News*
- Letter: Racist comments on First Nations Hydro story 'frustrating' – *Sudbury.com*

Please see below **Today in Twitter** for news articles.

March 27, 2017 Today in Twitter

[@dmrider](#) – I asked [@TorontoHydro](#) for info on \$ spent on consultants for privatization push. It hired consultants to fight me https://www.thestar.com/news/city_hall/2017/03/25/toronto-hydro-and-the-power-of-secrecy-analysis.html

- o [@jpags](#) - Take time to read this. Why is this information being withheld by a public agency from the public?

[@allisonjones_cp](#) - Government polling shows hydro was No. 1 concern in Ontario well before 8% rebate announced [#onpoli](#)

[@CPnewsboy](#) - Consumers know Ontario Liberals intentionally hiding cost of cap-and-trade on energy bills. By [@suntooz](#) [#onpoli](#)

[CPnewsboy](#) - . [@acarterglobal](#) on [@FocusOntario](#) reports Liberal gov't ads promising 25% hydro bill cuts this summer are misleading. "It's 17%." [#onpoli](#)

[@QueensParkToday](#) - When the Liberals say they are reducing hydro rates by 25%, PC MPPs shout in unison "17%"

[@QueensParkToday](#) - In QP, [@brownbarrie](#) asks why gov't took three years to act on hydro reform when its internal polling showed it was #1 issue since Dec. 2017.

[@brownbarrie](#) - Two ways Liberals are failing ON: not reversing course years ago & teeing up more future hydro rate hikes <http://www.ctvnews.ca/mobile/politics/polling-shows-hydro-was-no-1-concern-in-ontario-long-before-relief-announced-1.3341825> ... [#onpoli](#)

[@OntarioPCParty](#) - [@brownbarrie](#) asks the Premier why her Government sat on polling data for years that indicated the hydro crisis in Ontario? [#onpoli](#)

[Attrition, cap and trade take centre stage at district CFFO meeting](#)

Louis Pin
Chatham This Week
March 2017, 2017

The Chatham-Kent Essex district of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario held their annual general meeting in Chatham March 24. The critical issues were expected -- cap and trade frustration for hard-hit greenhouses, phosphorous runoff, and attrition in rural populations.

The latter has become a more immediate concern for farmers across Ontario. Young people aren't moving back to farms, some for lack of interest, but many are unable due to the costs associated with starting a farm.

"Succession planning has been an ongoing concern for the CFFO for quite a long time," said Suzanne Armstrong, director of research with the CFFO. "There's a lot of farmland now that we're anticipating in the next decade or so is going to need to change hands ... we want to encourage family farms to be planning well ahead."

"The main thing is a lot of the younger folks are already getting re-educated into more professional careers," said Jacques Tetreault, president of the Chatham-Kent-Essex district. "But what we're trying to do is keep them interested in the agricultural sector ... and that's why it's good to have our high schools and the Ridgetown agricultural college right there."

According to Tetreault he often sees farmers in the livestock industry take on after their parents a little more often, possibly because they work closer together as a family to manage their production.

But those young farmers are still struggling to break into the industry with rising rates and many are forced to find primary work, and to consider their farming career a part-time job.

"They're farm people, but they have a professional career," Tetreault said. "They'll do professional work in London or wherever, and then they'll come back to the farm ... we've all had to do that. Most of the farmers all had to do that in Essex or Kent County."

"I did that for 30 years, you know," he added. "An off-farm job ... you worked in the factories because they paid so well, and the benefits, and after you put in so much time there you fall back on the farm."

Economic concerns aren't just keeping young people from farms; they're also threatening current operations. CFFO president Clarence Nywening talked about the effect cap and trade has had on greenhouse growers in Chatham-Kent and surrounding municipalities, and how they've been petitioning to provincial government to aid businesses currently under pressure.

Some greenhouse growers, he said, are being forced to pay an additional \$5,000 to \$7,000 per acre in lieu of the regulation.

"It hit us like a brick wall," Nywening said. "Hopefully we'll get it rectified and figured out properly ... there was a relief program that was launched as of yesterday. But there's a lot of communication that needs to go on."

The province announced an 8 per cent reduction in hydro bills last year, and have other cuts coming over the next few months.

The CFFO -- and Ontario residents -- have been promised a major cut in hydro costs but Nywening does not see the current provincial plan as a long-term solution, which will eventually cost the government more money in the long run.

"It is very frustrating," Nywening said. "It's kicking the can down the road ... let's look at the big picture of this. You keep kicking the can down the road, pretty sure you can't kick it any further."

The district's AGM concluded with a presentation to long-time member Paul Tomen, honoured with a Lifetime Member Award.

Tomen was at the meeting and has been with the CFFO for more than 60 years. He grew up near Pain Court and continued farming in South Kent, near Erieau.

The Ontario-wide CFFO's annual general meeting will take place March 28.

CFFO pushing young farmer barbecues

This summer the CFFO will host four young farmer barbecues across Ontario as a way to connect young farmers and establish connections in rural communities.

The summer barbecues have become an annual event. This year the local event will take place in July, at CFFO president Clarence Nywening's property between Kent Bridge and Thamesville.

"I would love to see 2,000," said Nywening. "That's my dream, that's where I would love to see it go. I would love to see that many young farmers."

All farmers under 40 are invited to come to the events which will take place in Chatham-Kent, Niagara, Ottawa-area, and Oxford. Events will take place in July.

For more information call 519-837-1620 or go to christianfarmers.org.

[NDP's Krmpotich hearing all about skyrocketing hydro bills on the doorstep](#)

Content Team

Sault Online

March 27, 2017

City Councillor Joe Krmpotich, the NDP candidate in the upcoming Sault. Ste. Marie by-election, says the concern he hears most often when he is out talking to people in his community is their skyrocketing hydro bills.

"Nearly every day, I talk to someone who has a hydro horror story," said Krmpotich on Monday. "Last week, I spoke with the Campbells. They're seniors, and their bill has gone up to \$350 a month. They are on a fixed income -- how does Premier Wynne expect this couple to get by? Does she understand the value of \$350 to a couple on a fixed pension? And why won't the Conservatives say what they'd do about sky-high hydro bills?"

Margaret and Wilmuir Campbell told Krmpotich that they have done everything they can to keep bills down. They even try hard to avoid using appliance and lights during peak hours, but it never seems to be enough

– and the bills just keep getting bigger.

“My hydro bill is too high and the supposed plan that the Liberals have come up with is nowhere to be seen,” said Mr. Campbell. “I say, their plan is what got us in this mess in the first place. My wife and I are elderly, and we only have a certain amount of money per month to live on – keeping up with our hydro bill really hurts our finances.”

Krmpotich also spoke to Jamie LaCross while out canvassing last week. Jamie is a mom of two who told him that she has completely shut off the electric heat in her home, and is now keeping the house livable using propane heaters.

That’s because LaCross’ hydro bills had gotten up to a whopping \$1,200 per month, she said.

“People like Jamie are doing their best to make a good life for their little ones right here in the Sault,” said Krmpotich. “But Kathleen Wynne doesn’t get it. She’s using public dollars to run ads about hydro – but she’s not actually fixing the problem. For a mom like Jamie, that makes no sense.”

Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath asked the Liberal government today in question period what she was going to do to fix the mess she made in the hydro system. While Horwath has already released a complete plan to cut hydro rates, Premier Kathleen Wynne’s failure to take action means the Campbell and LaCross families have no idea if, or when, relief could come for them. The Conservatives also have no plan at all – but at one time supported the privatization of Hydro One.

The plan from Horwath and the NDP will cut hydro bills by as much as 30 per cent, and includes returning Hydro One to public hands – a move that will provide Ontario with an additional \$7 billion that can be invested in Ontario services. The NDP plan is in stark contrast to the Wynne government’s suggestion that they’ll use a band-aid borrowing scheme that will force people to pay \$40 billion more in interest to bankers.

[Earth Hour 2017 results in a 4% drop in electricity: Alectra Utilities](#)

Staff Post
CTV Barrie
March 27, 2017

Households across Ontario dimmed their lights over the weekend to mark Earth Hour.

In Barrie, hydro users reduced electricity consumption by one per cent according to Alectra Utilities.

Alectra Utilities' System Control Centres reported a service territory-wide four per cent electricity consumption reduction between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. on Saturday.

In Barrie, hydro users reduced electricity consumption by one per cent on March 25, 2017 according to Alectra Utilities. (CTV Barrie)

The utility provider serves 15 communities - including Aurora, Bradford West Gwillimbury (Bradford), Essa (Thornton), New Tecumseth and Penetanguishene.

Hydro customers in Aurora reduced electricity consumption by 4.9 per cent.

In Bradford, the reduction was seven per cent.

Electricity consumption was reduced by 16.2 per cent in Essa (Thornton).

In the Alliston, Beeton and Tottenham areas the reduction was 6.3 per cent.

Hydro users in Penetanguishene reduced electricity consumption by 4.5 per cent.

According to Alectra Utilities, the 2017 results represented a total savings of 112 megawatts (MW) in peak demand, or enough electricity to power 3,404 average-size homes over a 24-hour period.

[From the Park – Rent Increases](#)

Wawa News
March 27, 2017

This week New Democrats challenged the Liberal government on a new but important front that MPP offices receive many complaints about; rent increases. My colleagues and I hear from young renters who are worried that this might be the month they're hit with a rent hike they can't afford. We hear from families that say that the increases are chasing them from their homes – the place they're raising their kids. Seniors are not exempt from such pressures either.

As it stands today in Ontario, rent increases are regulated to ensure tenants are able to afford to keep a roof over their heads. However, according to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, only tenants living in buildings constructed before 1991 have rent increase caps which are based on annual rent increase guidelines. But those living in rental units built after 1991 have no such protection. Across the province we hear from constituents who are facing rent increases of hundreds of dollars or even \$1,000 a month in some instances. That's just not fair, and it doesn't have to be this way. The Wynne Liberals could have done something to eliminate this cruel loophole years ago but they chose not to. Well, now it's time to act.

On Monday during Question Period Andrea Horwath called on Premier Kathleen Wynne to stop allowing devastatingly unfair rent hikes. Later that day the NDP tabled a bill that proposes closing this loophole that allows landlords in buildings built later than 1991 to hike rents as much as they want, whenever they want. My colleagues and I will be working to pressure the government to bring this bill up for debate.

No doubt you have been hearing and reading about how the Liberals have decided to resolve the mess they've created with hydro in this province. Their answer is to download the horrific costs onto the backs of our generations to come. The Liberal strategy will cost the people of Ontario over \$40 billion in interest charges. Think back for a moment about the advice your parents gave you about running long term balances on your credit card. Paying interest charges is like burning your money. The only ones that are happy with interest charges are the banks. Yes, the Liberals say it will result in lowering our hydro bills by up to 25% but at what cost and at whose expense?

The NDP is not merely standing on the sideline and watching the parade of Liberal ads and radio promotions, paid for by the taxpayers of Ontario. You'll notice that the ads have the tag line, *"Paid for by the Government of Ontario."* (That's you.) So far, not one dime has come off people's sky-rocketing hydro bills and Wynne hasn't tabled legislation or even a credible plan to save us money. Yet, she's spending more of people's hard-earned dollars on ads claiming the problem is solved. In truth, it's all about Kathleen Wynne and her party, and not at all about making life more affordable for real people and real families who have been suffering day after day and month after month.

You can see for yourself that New Democrats have stepped up to the plate by releasing a plan which realistically addresses this cataclysmic situation the successive Conservative and Liberal governments have created. Our plan will cut all hydro bills by as much as 30 percent. It will even reduce hydro costs to our hospitals thus allowing them to redirect that money to where it should be going – to the front lines where care is needed. Our plan will enable us to reverse the selloff of Hydro One and put it back into public hands as well as a number of immediate relief measures – such as eliminating time-of-use billing – and permanent fixes to the system.

As for Patrick Brown and his Conservatives.... We don't know what their plan is yet. But we do know that privatization is part of the Conservative's DNA.

For further information and to compare the plans that each party is offering, try out our new webpage at ontariondp.ca/comparetheplans.

Michael Mantha is MPP for Algoma-Manitoulin. He is currently the NDP Critic for Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and NDP Critic for Northern Development and Mines. Michael Mantha is currently serving his second consecutive term as MPP for Algoma-Manitoulin. Constituents can reach his constituency office by email at mmantha-co@ndp.on.ca or by phone at 705-461-9710 or Toll free 1-800-831-1899

[Letter: Racist comments on First Nations Hydro story 'frustrating'](#)

Sudbury.com
March 27, 2017

On March 21, [Sudbury.com published an article](#) regarding the elimination of delivery fees for First Nations communities in Ontario.

Given that there are many reserves in remote and rural locations struggling with access to basic social services coupled with very high costs of living, the elimination of the delivery charge is a welcome change to many.

Rightfully so, however, many people disagree, and I do not blame them. Many people across Ontario are struggling to make ends meet as a result of rising hydro costs. Our government has prioritized playing politics over people, and Ontarians are angry.

The problem wasn't that people disagreed with this proposition; the problem is that many people, in their fits of Internet rage, felt it was necessary and appropriate to post disparaging comments hydro-related that are misinformed and inaccurate. Many comments show a clear lack of understanding of First Nations issues and a lack of empathy for the struggles that many First Nations' communities continue to face.

Comments such as "it was 100 years ago, get over it" or insinuating that Indigenous people receive a plethora of "free handouts" ranging from free education, free housing, etc. are not even close to the truth. One commenter boasted the "free housing" in Attawapiskat and suggested that people go claim their free houses. One individual suggested that if they can't afford to live (on the reserves) that they just move.

Having decided to take a stance in defence of First Nations people, I was subjected to insulting comments that had no bearing on the debate (apparently, it's perfectly fine to insult and degrade people as long as you do it online).

To be clear, I'm not offended by this (I actually found it quite entertaining). I was called a "libtard," a "liberal snowflake," and was told that people like me "retard development in this country."

While I am not insulted by this (hard to be insulted by something so pathetic and irrational), it's frustrating that we cannot sustain an intellectual debate over very important social issues.

I can fully understand why this policy change would upset people — delivery charges should be eliminated for everyone and hydro should be put back into public control. However, people who are upset should be able to fully articulate both why they disagree and (ideally) be able to propose alternative solutions.

Most of what I read reflected much of the deep-seated ignorance and institutional racism that continues to affect Indigenous people in Canada. I enjoy a healthy debate, but not when people resort to name calling — that's the kind of behavior reserved for rude children, not mature adults.

People have the right to be angry about Hydro issues, but they don't have the right to be ignorant about the facts and to insult people. Calling someone a "libtard" adds nothing to a debate; perpetuating myths and stereotypes about Indigenous people does nothing to validate your argument.