

Afternoon Energy Media Summary - May 3

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Date: Thu, 03 May 2018 15:01:30 -0400

Good afternoon,

Here is a roundup of the day's news:

- Ont. announces wood heating projects for northern, Indigenous communities - *The Canadian Press*
- Ontario political parties outline hydro plans - *Orillia Today*
- Turbine noise petition delivered to Queen's Park - *The Chatham Voice*
- Renfrew Hydro highlights success of Ontario Affordability Fund - *Renfrew Mercury*

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

Today in Twitter May 3, 2018

[@acoyme](#) - "Ontario New Democrats say they can buy back Hydro One and cut rates by 30 per cent, all with no extra costs — to which experts say: bunk."
<https://>

ipolitics.ca/article/puttin-g-humpty-dumpty-back-together-again-ontario-ndps-hydro-plan-leaves-experts-cold/

...

[@CanadianSIA](#) - On Tuesday the Ontario government announced a new solar rebate program that will allow homeowners and business owners to access funding, making solar energy and energy storage systems more affordable. You can read the full CanSIA press release here:
<http://bit.ly/2JMWLr4>

[Ont. announces wood heating projects for northern, Indigenous communities](#)

The Canadian Press
May 3, 2018

TORONTO — The provincial government says funding from Ontario's participation in the carbon market is being used on four new wood heat pilot programs.

The government says the projects are designed to help people in northern, rural and Indigenous communities save on energy costs.

It says the programs will also fight climate change and improve air quality by reducing the use of greenhouse gas-intensive fuel sources and old, inefficient wood stoves.

The programs will operate in communities without access to natural gas that rely on a mix of wood, propane, fuel oil and diesel-generated electricity to heat homes and other buildings.

The Indigenous-led pilot programs will operate in Wiikwemkoong and Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory and offer free installation of new wood and pellet heating systems.

Another two municipally-led pilot programs will offer rebates for these systems to people in the northern Ontario communities of Wawa and Sioux Lookout.

"This project is a tremendous step forward in providing safer and healthier living conditions for our communities that rely on diesel power," NAN deputy grand chief Derek Fox said Wednesday in a release.

"The communities that have received the wood stoves will see a reduction of the health, safety and environmental impacts associated with diesel generation," he said.

[Ontario political parties outline hydro plans](#)

Frank Matys

Orillia Today

May 3, 2018

Progressive Conservatives

Leader Doug Ford has made no bones about his plans for Hydro One, recently vowing to fire its current CEO as well as the entire board.

A tripling of electricity rates under the Liberals have cost the average Ontario family more than \$1,000 a year and driven jobs from the province, the Tories said in a statement provided to [Simcoe.com](#).

Hydro rates will continue to skyrocket if the Liberals are re-elected, the party said, adding that Ontarians' bills had tripled since 2003, boosting the average family's annual costs by as much as \$1,000 or more.

In addition to canning Hydro One's CEO — who was paid a reported \$6.2 million in 2017, including a \$1.7-million performance raise — the PCs would lower hydro rates by "reining in executive compensation, scrapping the Green Energy Act and putting a moratorium on future energy contracts," spokesperson Simon Jefferies said.

In a statement, Ford's campaign pointed to a release from the Fraser Institute focusing on hydro rates and the impact on families and jobs.

Specifically, it said residential costs had increased 71 per cent between 2008 and 2016 — more than double the national average increase of 34 per cent.

The report also claimed Ontario's electricity rates had reduced manufacturing employment by 75,000 jobs between 2008 and 2015.

The Liberals

Families and businesses have voiced concern over the rate at which the cost of electricity was rising, the Liberals acknowledged in a statement to [Simcoe.com](#).

"So last year we took action to reduce bills by 25 per cent on average and up to 50 per cent on average for rural residents and businesses. Further support is also available for low-income residents and rates will be kept to inflation for four years."

It added that, for decades, governments of all parties failed to invest in Ontario's electricity system.

The Liberals "inherited a dirty, unreliable system that needed billions of dollars in upgrades.

"We made those needed investments and ensured a greener, more sustainable system, including by eliminating coal — the largest reduction in greenhouse-gas emissions in North America. Today, Ontario's grid is 95 per cent emissions-free and we have zero smog days."

The Liberals say their long-term energy plan focuses on greener energy while setting out a comprehensive strategy for fair, predictable pricing.

Under previous Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown, the Tories “largely echoed our plan,” the Liberals added.

“Under their new leader, Doug Ford, all they’re offering on this complex file are slogans and sound bites that will do nothing to reduce electricity rates and will take us down the same chaotic path we’ve seen south of the border — governing by firing people.”

Green Party

Characterizing nuclear power as outdated technology, and Ontario’s current electricity system as unsustainable, the Green Party says it would position the province as a leader in the clean energy economy.

Priorities include an independent review of costs, benefits and alternatives of all forms of generation, with all results made public.

The party would place a moratorium on rebuilding any nuclear plant pending a review of costs and alternatives, while shutting down the Pickering Nuclear Power Station when its operating licence expires this August.

Looking to the long term, the Greens would set a target and develop a plan for Ontario to be powered with 100 per cent renewable energy.

Working with local communities, the party would provide incentives for small, renewable energy projects such as wind and solar, to reduce demand.

In a similar vein, renewable energy projects initiated by non-profit groups and co-operatives would be provided with expertise and zero-interest loans.

The party plans to import ‘green’ hydro from neighbouring provinces, noting Hydro Quebec has offered to sell power to Ontario at less than a third of the price that Ontario Power Generation would charge for nuclear power.

Homeowners, renters and businesses would receive incentives to convert natural gas, electric, oil, and propane heating systems to more efficient, affordable and low-carbon sources such as geothermal and heat pumps.

NDP

The NDP promises to cut hydro bills by about 30 per cent with a plan that includes reversing the sell-off of Hydro One and making permanent changes to the system for a long-term fix.

No rate increase would be required to finance the return of Hydro One to public ownership, according to the party.

The NDP says its plan pays off the return of Hydro One quickly and that, within a decade, the province would have \$1.6 billion more from dividends and payments to invest in hospitals, schools and Ontarians.

Priorities include re-establishing independent and public oversight of Hydro One, and creating an expert advisory panel to provide the most responsible path toward public ownership of power and power generation.

Rural and urban Ontarians would pay the same delivery costs under the plan, while mandatory time-of-use pricing would be ended.

Other measures include negotiating with Ottawa to remove the federal government’s five per cent portion from hydro bills.

The NDP would also address what it says is the oversupply of electricity, in which Ontarians pay for additional, and unnecessary power.

Affordable, renewable electricity would be imported as needed, while ‘bad’ contracts signed by previous governments would be cancelled, renegotiated or not renewed.

Any move to sell Hydro One in future would require permission of the public through a referendum.

[Turbine noise petition delivered to Queen's Park](#)

The Chatham Voice

May 3, 2018

Representatives from several Ontario communities where wind turbine projects are currently in the approval process, including Wallaceburg's Otter Creek project, were at Queen's Park Monday when three MPPs delivered a petition containing over 3,000 signatures.

The petition asks the Government of Ontario to follow its own rules for health and safety requirements for the wind turbines. The petition is related to the creation of "Transition Provisions" by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) in the Renewable Energy Approval process, which allows wind power developers to ignore new noise modelling guidelines, even for the newest unapproved power projects.

"The MOECC recognized that the previous requirements for turbine noise modelling were inadequate and they revised them," said Bonnie Rowe, spokesperson for Dutton Dunwich Opponents of Wind Turbines (DDOWT), in a release. The citizen group has applied for a Judicial Review of the Transition Provisions. "The noise modelling requirements are important to protect health and safety for people living near the turbines but now, the government has allowed the developers for the new projects to use the old ones — we think that's wrong.

"If the government sets rules, especially for health, then everyone should have to follow them, no exceptions."

Denise Shephard represented the Wallaceburg Area Wind Concerns citizen group at Queen's Park. "These power generators emit a range of noise and can be very disruptive for the citizens forced to live near them. We believe regulations set by the government to protect citizens should be followed," she stated.

Margaret Benke, representing two citizen groups, Concerned Citizens of North Stormont and Save the Nation, agreed.

"The MOECC does not have a good record of monitoring and correcting wind turbine projects that are not compliant with noise regulations. There are currently thousands of unresolved noise complaints from existing wind power projects. We want to ensure that rules are followed before these huge installations are built, to prevent non-compliance issues," Benke said.

MPPs presenting the petitions Monday were Jeff Yurek, from Elgin-Middlesex-London where the Strong Breeze Wind Power Project is proposed for Dutton Dunwich; Monte McNaughton, from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex where the Otter Creek Wind Farm is proposed for the Wallaceburg area; and Jim McDonell, MPP for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, who delivered petitions on behalf of the North Stormont area where the Nation Rise Wind Farm is proposed, and also the Municipality of The Nation and Champlain Township, where the Eastern Fields Wind Power Project is proposed.

[Renfrew Hydro highlights success of Ontario Affordability Fund](#)

Tiffany Lepack

Renfrew Mercury

May 3, 2018

On April 24 Renfrew council heard two success stories involving the new Ontario Affordability Fund (OAF) administered by Renfrew Hydro.

"The fund is making a difference in the lives of our residents ... (We) have partnered to help people who want to reduce their hydro bill but can't afford the cost to upgrade to more energy-efficient products," said Bill Nippard, president and chief administration officer for Renfrew Hydro.

Hydro One was the first to be approved for the OAF and Renfrew Hydro was the second utility in Ontario to be approved for funding.

Renfrew Hydro has received a \$500,000 budget in Renfrew and they can apply for more.

The first example Nippard provided was of two seniors living on a fixed income in an old apartment. The pair would only turn on the heat in extreme cold because they could not afford to pay for hydro.

They used appliances that were 35 years-old and a 25 year-old air conditioner.

Under the program they will receive some help, explained Nippard. They will get weather-stripping, a water heater blanket, energy-efficient appliances, LED light bulbs, thermostats, and a new Energy Star air conditioner.

As renters they need to seek the landlords approval.

"Will their electric costs decline?" asked Nippard. "Possibly or at least their quality of life should improve. They can use their electricity more often for the same cost because of the energy-efficient products."

He noted they are waiting to confirm their income to see if they qualify for level three and an air-to-air heat pump.

'Income and hydro costs are two of the factors used to determine what you can receive through the Affordability Fund," explained Nippard. "It doesn't matter if you rent or own as long as your name is on the hydro bill."

He encourages everyone to apply and they can be directed to see which programs apply.

Depending on a person's income and hydro bill if they haven't already been approved they may also be eligible for free products supplied and installed by Renfrew Hydro and funded by the OAF.

Some of the free products include LED light bulbs to a home energy plan to programmable thermostats, appliances, insulation and heat pumps up to a maximum of \$15,000.

The second case he highlighted was a senior who received the full amount; they were living on a fixed income and using electric blankets to stay warm with an older mini-split heat pump that was backed up by a baseboard heater.

They received upgrades to insulate the floor, walls and the 30-year-old freezer was replaced, new thermostats, LED bulbs, mini-split heat pumps and more.

Nippard encourages people to contact Renfrew Hydro by calling 1-855-494-38663 or for more information on the OAF visit: www.affordabilityfund.org.

Staff from the OAF will call you back to ask some questions about your income and once approved contact information is then sent to Renfrew Hydro who takes care of supplying the products.