MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

March 31, 2017

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Toronto Star: Sandals says CEO salary won't affect hydro bills; 'Very large' pay renews calls to return Hydro One workers to province's Sunshine List; A2; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION:	Toronto Star
PAGE:	A2
DATE:	2017.03.31
SECTION:	News
EDITION:	ONT
BYLINE:	Rob Ferguson Toronto Star
KEYWORDS:	large,packet,hydro,schmidt,stand,promised
ILLUSTRATION:	Treasury Board President Liz Sandals says government remains committed to cutting hydro bills.
WORD COUNT:	509

Sandals says CEO salary won't affect hydro bills; 'Very large' pay renews calls to return Hydro One workers to province's Sunshine List

The "very large" $4.84-million pay packet of Hydro One boss Mayo Schmidt won't stand in the way of a promised 25-per-cent rate cut on electricity bills, says cabinet minister Liz Sandals.

As opposition parties howled in outrage over $11 million in salary and incentives shared by Schmidt and his four top executives, Sandals said Thursday that the cost has no impact on skyrocketing hydro bills.

That's because the money is a fraction of the cost of operating Ontario's multibillion-dollar electricity system.

"The CEO's salary is not part of the equation," said Sandals, who controls the government's purse strings as president of the treasury board for Premier Kathleen Wynne.

"We recognize that it is a very high salary ... regardless of salary, we will be making a 25-per-cent cut for the residents," she added shortly before walking away from reporters.

Controversy over the Hydro One pay - released earlier this week as required under securities laws - foreshadowed Friday's release of the annual "Sunshine List" of provincial public-sector workers earning $100,000 or more.

That list, which grows every year as more workers cross the threshold, has become a lightning rod for concerns about levels of public-sector pay.

The Liberal government has repeatedly refused calls from the Progressive Conservatives and New Democrats to force Hydro One to resume reporting the salaries of thousands of its employees earning $100,000 or more.

This will be the second year Hydro One is no longer on the Sunshine List, because it became exempt when shares were first sold to the public.

The executive salaries are "proof just how out of touch the Wynne Liberals have become," said Progressive Conservative MPP Todd Smith, his party's energy critic.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said it is ironic the Liberals say on one hand that the government maintains majority control of Hydro One and yet Sandals acknowledges the CEO's compensation is huge.

"What it truly shows is that the Liberals have been talking out of both sides of their mouth when it comes to control over Hydro One," Horwath charged. "It just shows the duplicity of this government."

Hydro One issued a statement earlier this week saying the new executive team has cut $25 million in costs - more than double their annual compensation - and improved customer service.

Smith said a Conservative government would introduce legislation ordering Hydro One back on the Sunshine List if elected next spring, but acknowledged that would be impossible if the Wynne administration sells more shares to lower its stake to 50 per cent or less.

So far, the government has sold 30 per cent of the shares in Hydro One and is planning to sell another 30 per cent, leaving taxpayers with a 40 per cent stake.

The government says it will maintain majority control because no other shareholder is allowed to take more than a 10-per-cent stake in the transmission utility.

Wynne is selling the shares to raise an estimated $9 billion to improve public transit and other infrastructure, as well as pay down debt in the electricity system.

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Toronto Sun: Sunshine List not full story; Hydro One CEO's $4.5M salary 'not part of the equation'; A6; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: Toronto Sun
PAGE: A6
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: News
EDITION: Final
BYLINE: Allison Jones
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
KEYWORDS: million,received,hydro,factor,electricity,costs
ILLUSTRATION: Jack Boland, Toronto Sun / (See hardcopy for photo);
WORD COUNT: 356

Sunshine List not full story; Hydro One CEO's $4.5M salary 'not part of the equation'

The $4.5 million in pay received by Hydro One's CEO is not a factor in the government's plan to cut electricity costs for consumers, an Ontario cabinet minister said Thursday amid opposition concerns about the executive's compensation.

Treasury Board President Liz Sandals made her comments on the eve of the release of the so-called sunshine list.

The annual disclosure of public-sector salaries over $100,000 will be released Friday, but Hydro One salaries such as that of company boss Mayo Schmidt won't be on it.

Though the government still owns most of Hydro One, the company is required to follow the financial disclosure rules of publicly traded companies, which means disclosing the salaries of its CEO, CFO and next three highest-paid executives.

New filings show that Schmidt was paid $4.5 million in 2016 - an $850,000 salary plus bonuses - and those top five executives were paid a total of about $11.7 million. "Clearly that's a very large amount," said Sandals.

Sandals wouldn't say whether or not she thought the pay was appropriate at a time when the government is trying to reduce system costs and cut people's hydro bills. But she suggested the CEO's salary was not a factor in efforts to bring down hydro prices.

"The CEO salary is not part of the equation of will we be able to make the cut," she said. "Regardless of what those salaries are, we will make a 25%-off cut."

The cut coming this summer is actually an average of 17% - the 25% figure factors in an earlier 8% rebate.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said the executive salaries are relevant to cutting hydro costs.

"All of this is cost of operating the electricity system, it's part of the operating of Hydro One and so of course those increased salaries are going to impact the cost of our electricity," she said.

About 3,800 workers were paid over $100,000 in 2014, none of whom will be on the sunshine list this year.

PC energy critic Todd Smith has a private member's bill that would put Hydro One salaries back on the list.

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Toronto Sun: Voters at long last fed up with Grit smugness; A7; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: Toronto Sun
PAGE: A7
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: News
EDITION: Final
BYLINE: Sue-Ann Levy
SOURCE: Toronto Sun
KEYWORDS: remained,party,prime,minister,campbell,stunning
ILLUSTRATION: / (See hardcopy for photo);
WORD COUNT: 449

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In 1993, all that remained was a party of two when Tory Prime Minister Kim Campbell went down to a stunning defeat in a Liberal sweep.

Campbell was toast after barely four months in office.

Now history may be set to repeat itself with the provincial Liberals.

According to a new Forum Research poll released exclusively to the Toronto Sun, the Liberal party under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne stands to be eaten alive in June of 2018, left barely clinging to life with seven seats and third-party status.

The poll results indicate that if an election were to be held today, the Progressive Conservatives (PCs) would sweep the province with 86 seats (up from the current 29) and the NDP would win 29 (from the current 20).

The poll also shows that only 9% felt Wynne would make the best premier.

It's uncertain from the polling numbers whether Wynne herself will be run out of office in Don Valley West, although by rights she should for what has happened to Ontario under her watch.

But one thing is clear: Voters are at long last fed up with the smug Liberals, although one wonders why it took 14 years of corruption, waste and mismanagement for voters to reach this point.

Certainly there has been no end to Liberal incompetence. Still, I'm not surprised at all what Wynne has done to Ontario, given how she handled balancing the books when a Toronto school trustee in 2000 (she ignored the idea).

Now when her popularity is in freefall, there seems to be no end to the ways the premier intends to devise to try to buy back voter support.

The 17% cut in hydro rates was followed by this week's announcement to give upwards of 210,000 Ontario students free grants under OSAP.

Still, as I've repeatedly discovered in the world of politics, voters don't necessarily vote in a particular party, they typically send another party packing.

(Witness what has happened south of the border with Donald Trump, a huge backlash in response to Barack Obama's ineptitude.) The fact that the poll shows 44% "do not know" what they think of PC Leader Patrick Brown (27% approve and 29% disapprove) - and 36% approve of NDP Leader Andrea Horwarth - should be very concerning to the PC party.

Brown, while seemingly hardworking and tremendously focused on the ground game (networking around the province), still isn't seen as standing for much and does not, in my view, possess the warmth or approachability of Horwath.

And as we observed in elections gone by, the PCs have a tremendous knack of snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

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24 Hours Toronto: Voters at long last fed up with Grit smugness; A3; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: 24 Hours Toronto
PAGE: A3
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: News
EDITION: Final
BYLINE: Sue-Ann Levy
SOURCE: 24 Hours Toronto
KEYWORDS: remained,party,prime,minister,campbell,stunning
ILLUSTRATION: / (See hardcopy for photo);
WORD COUNT: 444

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Ottawa Sun: Voters finally fed up with Grit smugness; A25; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: Ottawa Sun
PAGE: A25
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: Classified
EDITION: Final
BYLINE: Sue-Ann Levy
SOURCE: Ottawa Sun
KEYWORDS: remained,party,prime,minister,campbell,stunning
WORD COUNT: 449

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The Hamilton Spectator: CEO's pay not part of power rate equation: minister; A16; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION:	The Hamilton Spectator
PAGE:	A16
DATE:	2017.03.31
SECTION:	Canada / World
EDITION:	First
BYLINE:	Allison Jones The Canadian Press
KEYWORDS:	million,received,hydro,factor,electricity,costs
ILLUSTRATION:	Treasury Board president Liz Sandals says cutting electricity costs will not include Hydro One CEO's pay.Toronto Star file photo
WORD COUNT:	514

CEO's pay not part of power rate equation: minister

The $4.5 million in pay received by Hydro One's CEO is not a factor in the government's plan to cut electricity costs for consumers, an Ontario cabinet minister said Thursday amid opposition concerns about the executive's compensation.

Treasury Board president Liz Sandals made her comments on the eve of the release of the province's so-called sunshine list.

The annual disclosure of public-sector salaries over $100,000 will be released Friday, but Hydro One salaries such as that of company boss Mayo Schmidt won't be on it.

Though the government still owns most of Hydro One - 30 per cent has been sold - the company is required to follow the financial disclosure rules of publicly traded companies, which means disclosing the salaries of its CEO, CFO and next three highest-paid executives.

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"Clearly that's a very large amount," said Sandals.

Sandals wouldn't say whether or not she thought the pay was appropriate at a time when the government is trying to reduce system costs and cut people's hydro bills.

But she suggested the CEO's salary was not a factor in efforts to bring down hydro prices.

"The CEO salary is not part of the equation of will 'we be able to make the cut,' " she said. "Regardless of what those salaries are, we will make a 25 per cent-off cut."

The cut coming this summer is actually an average of 17 per cent - the 25 per cent figure factors in an earlier eight per cent rebate.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said the executive salaries are relevant to cutting hydro costs.

"All of this is cost of operating the electricity system, it's part of the operating of Hydro One and so of course those increased salaries are going to impact the cost of our electricity," she said.

Schmidt was appointed Aug. 31, 2015, and in the last four months of that year earned $1.3 million, but the former CEO was paid $745,000 in 2014. About 3,800 workers were paid over $100,000 that year, none of whom will be on the sunshine list this year.

Progressive Conservative energy critic Todd Smith has a private member's bill that would put Hydro One salaries back on the list.

"The Wynne Liberals don't want the people of Ontario to know that their rates have helped create a new millionaire's club at Hydro One," Smith said. "Hydro One is still under the majority ownership of the public, but Premier Kathleen Wynne has removed these salaries from the public's watchful eye."

The previous sunshine list showed 115,431 people were earning more than $100,000 - an increase of nearly 4,000 people despite the fact 3,774 Hydro One workers were not on the list for the first time.

Tom Mitchell, the former CEO at Ontario Power Generation who resigned last summer, topped the 2015 list at $1.59 million.

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London Free Press: No CEO pay, hydro bill cut link, Grit says; With hydro One now partly private, higher-paid staff will no longer appear on sunshine list; A8; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: London Free Press
PAGE: A8
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: News
EDITION: Final
BYLINE: Allison Jones
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
KEYWORDS: million,received,hydro,chief,executive,factor
DATELINE: TORONTO
WORD COUNT: 408

No CEO pay, hydro bill cut link, Grit says; With hydro One now partly private, higher-paid staff will no longer appear on sunshine list

The $4.5 million in pay received by Hydro One's chief executive is not a factor in how much the government plans to cut electricity costs for consumers, an Ontario cabinet minister said Thursday amid opposition concerns about the executive's compensation.

Treasury Board President Liz Sandals made her comments on the eve of the release of the province's so-called sunshine list.

The annual disclosure of public-sector salaries over $100,000 comes Friday, but Hydro One salaries such as that of company boss Mayo Schmidt won't be on it. However, the company is required to follow the financial disclosure rules of publicly traded companies, which covers the salaries of its CEO, CFO and next three highest-paid executives.

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Waterloo Region Record: Hydro One CEO $4.5M salary 'not part of the equation' of bill cuts; A5; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION:	Waterloo Region Record
PAGE:	A5
DATE:	2017.03.31
SECTION:	NEWS
EDITION:	First
BYLINE:	Allison Jones
SOURCE:	The Canadian Press
KEYWORDS:	million,received,hydro,factor,electricity,costs
ILLUSTRATION:	Treasury Board president Liz Sandals says cutting electricity costs will not include cutting the $4.5-million in pay received by Hydro One's CEO.Toronto Star file photo
WORD COUNT:	430

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"The Wynne Liberals don't want the people of Ontario to know that their rates have helped create a new millionaire's club at Hydro One," Smith said.

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Sudbury Star: NDP hydro promise 'hollow' - Sudbury MPP; A10; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: Sudbury Star
PAGE: A10
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: Opinion
EDITION: Final
SOURCE: Sudbury Star
KEYWORDS: leader,andrea,hydro,scheme,short,details
WORD COUNT: 338

NDP hydro promise 'hollow' - Sudbury MPP

NDP leader Andrea Horwath's hydro scheme is short on details and long on hollow promises. Many of their proposals rely on a vague and yet-to-be-determined "expert panel" that will be convened in the future, as well as pie-in-the-sky negotiations with the federal government. These offer little to Northern Ontarians in the short-term, compared to the real and meaningful relief our government's Fair Hydro Plan will provide to everyone starting this summer.

The NDP's most expensive idea - buying back more than $4-billion in shares of Hydro One - will not take one cent off electricity bills. What it will do is send billions to the stock market instead of making much needed infrastructure investments here in Sudbury and across Ontario.

And as if the NDP proposal wasn't damaging enough, their scheme would scrap Time of Use pricing, which would dial back conservation savings, and potentially lead to supply gaps. Time of Use has been a success, reducing our peak demand by up to five per cent, which means we don't need to build costly new generation. However, it may not be the best model for everyone in the province. That's exactly why we are already piloting different models that can give electricity customers choice in how they're billed. But this needs to be implemented responsibly, not through a short-sighted system like the NDP has proposed.

Through Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan, our government is cutting electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all families starting this summer, along with as many as half a million farms and small businesses. It is the single largest rate reduction in the province's history, with rates also held to inflation for the next four years. Our plan is about real relief for Ontarians and a way to ensure greater fairness in our electricity system. Patrick Brown and the PCs have no plan and the NDP hydro proposal offers nothing practical or substantial when it comes to reduced electricity costs for Sudbury families and small businesses.

Glenn Thibeault

Sudbury MPP Energy minister

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The Chronicle Journal: [Ont-Sunshine-List, 1st Writethru code:2 Update:ADDS quotes, details. INDEX: Utilities, Ontario, P]; 2017.03.31

PUBLICATION: The Chronicle Journal
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: Quebec- Ontario general news
KEYWORDS: writethru,update,quotes,details,index,utilities
WORD COUNT: 545

[Ont-Sunshine-List, 1st Writethru code:2 Update:ADDS quotes, details. INDEX: Utilities, Ontario, P]

Ont-Sunshine-List, 1st Writethru

code:2

Update:ADDS quotes, details.

INDEX: Utilities, Ontario, Politics

HL:Hydro One CEO $4.5M salary 'not part of the equation' of bill cuts: minister

By Allison Jones

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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PUBLICATION: North Bay Nugget
PAGE: A2
DATE: 2017.03.31
SECTION: News
EDITION: Final
SOURCE: The Canadian Press
KEYWORDS: cabinet,minister,charge,government,purse,strings
ILLUSTRATION: Postmedia File Photo / Treasury Board President Liz Sandals.;
DATELINE: TORONTO
WORD COUNT: 376

Hydro One's top 5 execs paid $11.7M

Ontario's cabinet minister in charge of government purse strings says the $4.5-million pay received by Hydro One's CEO is "not part of the equation" of cutting electricity costs for consumers.

Treasury Board President Liz Sandals made the remarks on the eve of the release of the so-called sunshine list, which sets out the salaries of all public-sector employees making $100,000 or more.

Both opposition parties complain that even though the government still owns most of Hydro One - 30 per cent has been sold - those salaries won't appear on the sunshine list because of its status as a private company.

Financial regulations require Hydro One to disclose the salaries of its CEO, CFO and next three highest-paid executives.

New filings show that CEO Mayo Schmidt was paid $4.5 million in 2016 - an $850,000 salary plus bonuses - and those top five executives were paid a total of about $11.7 million.

Sandals says "clearly that's a very large amount," but "the CEO salary is not part of the equation of will we be able to make the cut" to electricity bills.

The Liberal government has promised that residential and small business electricity consumers will see an average cut of 17 per cent on their bills this summer.

PC Energy Critic Todd Smith, meanwhile, announced that he is tabling a private member's bill to put Hydro One salaries back under the public's watchful eye.

"The (Kathleen) Wynne Liberals don't want the people of Ontario to know that their rates have helped create a new millionaire's club at Hydro One," said Smith.

Earlier this week it was revealed that Hydro One's CEO made $4.5 million, roughly $500,000 more than was anticipated.

Earlier in the year, it was revealed that the CEO of Ontario Power Generation could have been in the line for a $2.3-million raise.

"It's clear that Ontario's system is broken. Life is harder than ever before, but millionaire executives are raking in massive pay hikes. The Ontario PCs are calling on the Wynne Liberals to institute some checks and balances to fix this broken system," added Smith. "If the Wynne Liberals are too out of touch to listen, we will take action to address this problem ourselves."

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The Chatham Daily News: No CEO pay, hydro bill cut link, Grit says; A4; 2017.03.31

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No CEO pay, hydro bill cut link, Grit says

The $4.5 million in pay received by Hydro One's chief executive is not a factor in how much the government plans to cut electricity costs for consumers, an Ontario cabinet minister said Thursday amid opposition concerns about the executive's compensation.

Treasury Board President Liz Sandals made her comments on the eve of the release of the province's so-called sunshine list.

The annual disclosure of public-sector salaries over $100,000 comes Friday, but Hydro One salaries such as that of company boss Mayo Schmidt won't be on it. However, the company is required to follow the financial disclosure rules of publicly traded companies, which covers the salaries of its CEO, CFO and next three highest-paid executives.

New filings show Schmidt was paid $4.5 million in 2016 - an $850,000 salary plus bonuses - and those top five executives were paid a total of about $11.7 million.

"Clearly that's a very large amount," said Sandals, who wouldn't say whether she thought the pay was appropriate at a time when the government is trying to reduce system costs and cut people's hydro bills.

But she suggested the CEO's salary was not a factor in efforts to bring down hydro prices.

"The CEO salary is not part of the equation of 'will we be able to make the cut,' " she said. "Regardless of what those salaries are, we will make a 25 per cent-off cut."

The 25 per cent figure factors in an earlier eight-per-cent rebate and a cut of an average of 17 per cent coming this summer.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said the executive salaries are relevant to cutting hydro costs.

"All of this is cost of operating the electricity system, it's part of the operating of Hydro One and so of course those increased salaries are going to impact the cost of our electricity," she said.