

Afternoon Energy Media Summary - Apr. 26, 2018

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Good afternoon,

Here is a roundup of the day's news:

- * Doug Ford promises 'commission of inquiry' into Liberal deficit numbers - *CBC News*
- * Ban on hydro disconnects ends May 1 - *North Bay Nugget*
- * Amherstburg residents near nuclear plant to get anti-radiation pills - *CTV News*
- * Ontario election agenda: What you need to know for April 26 - *TVO*

[Doug Ford promises 'commission of inquiry' into Liberal deficit numbers](#)

CBC News

Apr. 26, 2018

Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader Doug Ford would appoint an independent commission of inquiry to investigate the \$5 billion difference between the deficit numbers of the governing Liberals and the auditor general.

Ford made the campaign pledge Thursday, one day after Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk [reported](#) the government's deficit for 2018-19 should be calculated as \$11.7 billion, not the \$6.7 billion figure the Liberals tabled in their March budget.

This is "one of the largest financial scandals in Canadian history," Ford told a news conference in downtown Toronto. "In their desperation, the Wynne Liberals have cooked the books."

The Liberals characterize the difference in the budget figures as an accounting dispute over two issues: the funding of their Fair Hydro Plan to cut electricity rates and the expenses related to two provincial pension plans.

"What we are witnessing is a betrayal of the public trust," Ford said. "We cannot trust anything about the Liberal estimates or projections. Their budget is no longer worth the paper it's written on."

Ford said the inquiry would recommend options to "restore integrity" to the government's financial reporting.

He likened the inquiry to former federal auditor general Sheila Fraser's probe of the [sponsorship scandal](#). However, he stopped short of alleging any criminal activity in the provincial Liberals' deficit numbers.

[Ban on hydro disconnects ends May 1](#)

North Bay Nugget

Apr. 26, 2018

North Bay Hydro is advising its customers that an annual winter disconnection ban will be lifted May 1 and that all accounts must be in good standing.

“North Bay Hydro values using disconnection only as a last resort,” says the local utility. “We work with our customers whenever possible to make arrears payment arrangements when difficulties arise and we urge customers to be proactive; please contact Customer Service to make other necessary arrangements if needed.”

The utility says other opportunities for assistance are always available. Most notably, information for Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) can be found at <https://www.northbayhydro.com/residential/assistance-programs>

If you find your electricity bill is a burden, help is available by calling **1-855-494-FUND**, or visiting <https://www.affordabilityfund.org/>

Learn more about your rights and responsibilities about energy services at <https://www.oeb.ca/consumer-protection/how-we-protect-consumers/consumer-charter>

[Amherstburg residents near nuclear plant to get anti-radiation pills](#)

CTV News
Apr. 26, 2018

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and the Town of Amherstburg will be starting Potassium Iodide pill distribution in the primary zone near the nuclear generating station.

Residents in the zone, 16.1 km from Enrico Fermi 2 Nuclear Generating Station (Fermi 2), will begin getting the pills on May 7.

KI pills block the thyroid from absorbing radioactive iodine which may be released during a nuclear incident.

In the very unlikely event of a nuclear emergency, KI pills would help to prevent the long term development of thyroid cancer.

Residents that live within the primary zone and on Boblo Island will be receiving letters this week with details inviting them to pick up free KI pills for their home and ask any questions they may have.

The health unit says if you do not receive a letter inviting you to pick up KI pills, your home does not fall within the primary zone.

Residents living within the secondary zone will have an opportunity to receive pills for their home in the near future.

KI pills are only to be taken if instructed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario. They should be stored in a safe, dry, and accessible place along with your 72-hour emergency kit.

Health unit officials say the risk has not changed at Fermi 2, however what has changed is the regulatory framework for Canadian nuclear installations.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has mandated that all residents within the primary zone of a nuclear installation have KI pills available in their homes.

While Fermi 2 is not regulated by the CNSC, health unit and town officials want the residents living within the primary zone of Fermi 2 to be as prepared as all other Canadian residents.

For more information on KI pills and KI distribution, please visit www.wechu.org/KI or call **519-258-2146 ext. 4445**.

[Ontario election agenda: What you need to know for April 26](#)

TVO

Apr. 26, 2018

Here's our daily look at what's making news in the lead-up to the next provincial election.

Latest news

- * [Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says Ontario will run an \\$11.7 billion deficit this year — not \\$6.7 billion as the Liberal government has claimed](#). There are two reasons for the \$5 billion discrepancy: One, the government considers the \$11 billion in two large public-pension plans it co-sponsors to constitute an asset; Lysyk says they should not be treated as assets, because the government can't readily access the funds. [Lysyk also says that the government doesn't accurately reflect the true cost of its "Fair Hydro Plan," which is geared toward temporarily reducing electricity rates by 25 per cent](#). The Liberals downplayed Lysyk's report, saying it comes as part of an ongoing dispute between the Auditor General and the government's accountants. Progressive Conservative parliamentary leader Vic Fedeli said the Liberals have "deliberately misled" MPPs and the people of Ontario. [NDP finance critic John Vanthof said that electricity bills will rise again](#) as a result of the government's "bogus accounting scheme."
- * [Progressive Conservative leader Doug Ford says he supports Saskatchewan's decision to ask the courts to rule on the constitutionality of the planned federal carbon tax](#). "I have always been very clear; the people of Ontario can't afford a carbon tax in whatever name or form. Not now. Not ever," Ford said in a statement.
- * [Ontario's foreign buyers' real-estate tax seems to be working](#). According to new numbers released by the government, the tax, launched last year, has raised about \$41 million and reduced off-shore property transactions. In May of last year, 4.7 per cent of property transactions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area involved at least one foreign entity. By February of this year, that share had dropped to 1.6 per cent. The measure was originally taken because of concerns that foreign interest in the property market was contributing to skyrocketing housing prices.
- * [Steve Paikin writes that spurned Tories are crying foul over Ford's "brazen abuse of power" when it comes to nominating candidates](#).
- * [Another longtime Liberal MPP is calling it quits](#). Harinder Takhar, a former cabinet minister who represents Mississauga-Erindale, has announced his retirement. Takhar was first elected in 2003. [He joins the 11 other Liberal MPPs who have already resigned or have announced that they won't seek re-election](#).
- * [Another Liberal MPP, however, has signed on for the campaign – and he'll be facing off against a formidable opponent](#). Shafiq Qaadri has held Etobicoke North for the Liberals since 2003. But this time, his opponent in the riding will be Ford.
- * [Bob Hepburn of the Toronto Star reports that Liberals are privately discussing a particular challenge they're having campaigning against Ford](#): his supporters don't seem to care about what he's done or said in the past.

What to watch for

- * Premier Kathleen Wynne was at Toronto's King Edward Junior and Senior Public School with Education Minister Indira Naidoo-Harris at 9:15 a.m. to announce 3,100 new daycare spaces in the province, part of a plan to create 100,000 spots over five years. Wynne will attend Question Period at 10:30 a.m. Her afternoon will be taken up with constituency appointments.
- * Ford will respond to the Auditor General's pre-election report on Ontario's finances at the Toronto

Hilton at 10:30 a.m.

- * NDP leader Andrea Horwath will hold a press conference at Queen's Park at 10 a.m. to discuss her private members bill, A Time to Care Act.
- * How will the political parties respond to the key challenges of energy, trade, housing, and competitiveness? The Toronto Board of Trade has released policy playbooks on all four of these areas. [Board CEO Jan De Silva talks to *The Agenda on Politics* podcast about them and about how effective he thinks the parties' approaches to these issues are.](#)

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.