Infomart Newsletters

From: Infomart Newsletters
Sent: December 11, 2017 7:43 AM
To: Rosemarie Leclair
Subject: Morning News Clippings - Monday, December 11, 2017

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Morning News Clippings

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Date: Monday, December 11, 2017
Edited by: Tara Brautigam (Tara.Brautigam@oeb.ca)

Contact Editor

Clippings Summary

News - 22 Results

Energy board coming to Ingersoll | Ingersoll Times

www.ingersolltimes.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

Ontario Energy Board is holding a community meeting Tuesday, Dec. 12 in Ingersoll.

OEB to hear from Customers of Erie Thames Powerlines about Electricity Rate Application - News Headlines

www.portstanleynews.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

Customers of Erie Thames Powerlines are encouraged to participate in the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) review of the utility's application to raise residential electricity distribution rates by $2.70 per month for the typical customer. Other ...

Rate hike ask prompts public meeting; The Ontario Energy Board will hold a public meeting on a possible rate increase for Erie Thames Powerlines customers

Woodstock Sentinel-Review - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $341
Reach: 7920 **Page:** A1 / Front

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will be holding a community meeting Tuesday in Ingersoll at Unifor Local 88 Union Hall. Erie Thames Powerlines applied for an increase in ...

Jim McDonell – This week at Queen's Park — Morrisburg Leader

www.morrisburgleader.ca - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

Paul Crawford noted on Friday, December 8, 2017
OEB is mentioned.

As if the energy file couldn't get any more attention at Queen's Park, this week's report by the Auditor-General, as well as other media revelations, threw more doubt over the transparency and management of the electricity system in Ontario.

Tories want OPP to investigate 'ineligible expenses' billed by power plants

thestar.com - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Rob Ferguson
Reach: 999000

The Progressive Conservatives are calling on police to investigate $260 million in "ineligible expenses" - including staff car washes and scuba gear - billed by nine power plants, as revealed in last week's auditor general report. These ...

Pressure on Liberals to recoup ineligible expenses filed by Ontario power plants

Mississauga News - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $2,583
Reach: 123300 **Page:** 1

Pressure is building on Ontario's Liberal government to recoup millions more from nine power plants caught filing up to $260 million in ineligible expenses, including staff car washes, parkas, scuba gear and raccoon traps. With only ...

A damning indictment of private power

Waterloo Region Record - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Thomas Walkom

Ad Value: $3,888
Reach: 63465 **Page:** A7

The private sector, we are always told, produces low costs and efficiencies. In many cases, this handy bromide is true. But as two recent bombshell reports point out, it does not hold in the world of electricity generation. Both the ...

When it's broken, Wynne's Liberals don't fix it

Toronto Sun - Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $2,349
Reach: 222184 **Page:** A15

While Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk's annual report on Ontario government blunders in the electricity sector uncovered millions of dollars of waste this year instead of billions, it also revealed something especially disturbing. ...

GM LOOKING TO BUILD CLEAN-ENERGY PROJECT

The Globe and Mail - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $4,055
Reach: 372649 **Page:** B3

General Motors of Canada Co. is proposing to build a **renewable energy** project at its St. Catharines Propulsion Plant in **Ontario**, a first-of-its-kind endeavour the auto maker estimates will reduce greenhouse ...

GM Canada proposing first of its kind renewable energy project at Ontario facility; GM Canada proposing renewable energy project

Broadcast news - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral

OSHAWA, Ont. - General Motors of Canada is proposing to build a **renewable energy** project at its St. Catharines Propulsion Plant in **Ontario**, a first of its kind endeavour for the automaker which it ...

Co-generation systems aim to save Windsor $1.1M annually

Windsor Star - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Brian Cross

Ad Value: $3,896
Reach: 58088 **Page:** A4

New cogeneration systems that generate **electricity** and also capture byproduct thermal **energy** to help with heating are projected to shave $1.1 million annually from the **energy** bills at three of the city's biggest ...

Is shifting to a carbon tax smart policy, or just politics?

Toronto Star - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn OPINION

Ad Value: $16,804
Reach: 500678 **Page:** A10

The new Progressive Conservative election platform is dressed for success - ambitious and accessible. Also brimming with flash and cash to attract attention. Unlike past platforms, it is as much progressive as conservative: If Patrick Brown becomes ...

Liberal promises should cost less

Waterloo Region Record - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $2,065
Reach: 63465 **Page:** A6

Behind the glowing promises of all the goodies Ontario's Liberals are going to give you lurks the less satisfying and highly costly reality of what the government delivers. The latest annual report from **Ontario** Auditor-General Bonnie ...

Guelph hospitals get provincial funds for energy efficiency improvements

GuelphMercury.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: jlovell@guelphmercurytribune.com
Reach: 11700

Guelph's hospitals are among those on the receiving end of the province's **cap-and-trade** program. **Guelph** General Hospital (GGH) and St. Joseph's Health **Centre** are the recipients of a total of ...

More costs to nuclear power in long run

Sudbury Star - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Stiig Larsen Sudbury

Ad Value: $218
Reach: 114934 **Page:** A10

I would like to reply to Fred Lammi's letter about nuclear **power** ("Nuclear **power** may be our best option," Dec. 7). I take issue with his claim that nuclear **power** is one of the cheapest sources of ...

Waging war on small businesses; And Wynne's popularity continues to plummet

Ottawa Sun - Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Andre Marin

Ad Value: $1,666
Reach: 38456 **Page:** A5

I just received a notice from the security company monitoring my home. It laid out the crushing financial pain it's about to endure as a result of the provincial government rushing through a 30% raise to the minimum wage to $15 an hour. The email ...

Liberal Waste

Ottawa Sun - Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Larry Comeau

Ad Value: $223
Reach: 38456 **Page:** A18

Just when I thought the Wynne Liberals could not possibly do more fiscal damage in their mismanagement of the **hydro** file, we find taxpayers have been scamme d out of more millions. **Ontario** auditor general Bonnie Lysyk is the ...

Out of control electricity costs cannot go on

The Sachem - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $65
Reach: 6967 **Page:** 1

For years, I have been railing against the high cost of **electricity** - full disclosure, I heat with **hydro**, which means I go through 10 to 20 cords of wood a winter. **Ontario** now has the fastest-rising ...

Bruce Power fined for accident in which worker burned

Owen Sound Sun Times - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Frances Learment

Ad Value: $344
Reach: 13483 **Page:** A1 / Front

Bruce **Power** Inc. was fined $110,000 for a preventable workplace accident in which a worker was burned when flames erupted as he drilled a hole during maintenance on a rotor at the Tiverton plant's non-nuclear side of the No. 8 Generator, ...

Canadian energy firms fight Trump's coal plan

The Globe and Mail - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value: $18,456
Reach: 372649 **Page:** B1

Canadian **energy** companies have entered a battle over the U.S. **electricity** market in which **natural** **gas**, hydroelectric and **renewable**-**energy** providers are opposing Trump ...

B.C.'s Premier John Horgan to announce decision on Site C hydroelectric dam

Financial Post - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: The Canadian Press
Reach: 607500

VICTORIA - British Columbia Premier John Horgan will be giving his government's decision on the future of the controversial Site C hydroelectric dam this morning. The New Democrat government has been debating whether to continue the construction of ...

Alberta's power grid to get green boost as auction bidders revealed

The Globe and Mail - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: JEFF LEWIS

Ad Value: $14,718
Reach: 309154 **Page:** B1

Alberta is set to unveil successful bidders for 400 megawatts of **renewable** **energy** projects in a major step by the oil-rich province toward transforming its **power** grid. The province will announce results of a ...

Clippings Summary

Full Articles

Energy board coming to Ingersoll | Ingersoll Times

www.ingersolltimes.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral

Ontario Energy Board is holding a community meeting Tuesday, Dec. 12 in Ingersoll.

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OEB to hear from Customers of Erie Thames Powerlines about Electricity Rate Application - News Headlines

www.portstanleynews.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
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Customers of Erie Thames Powerlines are encouraged to participate in the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) review of the utility's application to raise residential electricity distribution rates by $2.70 per month for the typical customer. Other customers may also be affected.

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SENTINEL-REVIEW

Rate hike ask prompts public meeting; The Ontario Energy Board will hold a public meeting on a possible rate increase for Erie Thames Powerlines customers

Woodstock Sentinel-Review - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $341
Reach: 7920 **Page:** A1 / Front

The **Ontario Energy Board** (**OEB**) will be holding a community meeting Tuesday in Ingersoll at Unifor Local 88 Union Hall.

Erie Thames Powerlines applied for an increase in **electricity rates** - an average of $2.70 per month - starting May 1, 2018.

The **OEB** is hosting the **public** meeting to provide local residents an opporunity to ask questions and give their opinions on the possible **rate** increase. Customers of **Erie Thames Powerlines** can make brief presentations during the meeting and take part in a question and answer section. People interested in making a presentation can sign up by contacting the **OEB** at registrar@**oeb**.ca, calling 1-877-632-2727 or visit www.**oeb**.ca/participate.

"We control costs by reviewing and testing the requested **rate** change through an open and robust **review** process," **OEB** registrar Kristi Sebalj said in a media release.

"We hold **utilities** to account, keeping **rates** as low as possible, while making sure **utilities** have what they need to keep the lights on," the release added.

A media release from the **OEB** wrote the increase "relate(s) to its (**Erie Thames Powerlines**) **distribution** business and do not reflect any credits or other changes resulting from the **Fair Hydro** Act, 2017."

The release says the meeting is to inform people on **Erie Thames Powerlines** costs and **rate application**, and how people can get involved in the **OEB**'s **rate review** process and offer comments on the **Erie Thames Powerlines application**.

The release noted the **OEB** has just started to look at the **rate application**, with the **review** process normally taking between six to nine months to allow all parties a chance to participate.

"It's up to the **utility** to prove to the **OEB** why it needs a **rate** increase to cover these costs," Sebalj said in the release. "**Utilities** rarely get all they ask for."

The **OEB** has reviewed more than 130 major **rate** applications from 2009 to 2016 and reduced **rate** increase an average of about 40 per cent, the release said, and have held 30 community meetings since 2016.

Erie Thames Powerlines serves customers throughout Oxford County, with their website saying Tavistock, Embro, East-Zorra, Ingersoll, Beachville, Burgessville, norwich and Otterville fall in its territory of more than 18,000 customers.

The **OEB** is **Ontario**'s **independent energy regulator** for **electricity** and **natural gas**. The organization makes final decisions on **energy rates** after **energy** providers apply for changes in prices.

To read **Erie Thames Powerlines application**, visit: (bit.ly)

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Jim McDonell – This week at Queen's Park — Morrisburg Leader

www.morrisburgleader.ca · Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral

As if the energy file couldn't get any more attention at Queen's Park, this week's report by the Auditor-General, as well as other media revelations, threw more doubt over the transparency and management of the electricity system in Ontario.

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Tories want OPP to investigate 'ineligible expenses' billed by power plants

thestar.com · Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Rob Ferguson
Reach: 999000

The Progressive Conservatives are calling on police to investigate $260 million in "ineligible expenses" - including staff car washes and scuba gear - billed by nine **power** plants, as revealed in last week's auditor general report.

These are "abuses so egregious that a second look by law enforcement is only prudent," Tory MPP and **energy** critic Todd Smith says in a one-page letter to OPP Commissioner Vince Hawkes.

"I have serious concerns about what appeared to be a broad and systemic abuse of the **energy** system and, ultimately, the hard-earned money of **ratepayers**," Smith added.

"I have no faith in the Liberal government's ability to punish the companies responsible."

Previous requests for police investigations from opposition parties at Queen's Park have resulted in charges against two of Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberal organizers in the 2015 **Sudbury** byelection - although a judge dismissed that case (www.thestar.com) in October.

There were also criminal counts in regard to allegedly deleted documents after two gas-fired power plants were scrapped by then-premier Dalton McGuinty before the 2011 election.

A verdict in that trial, involving two former key McGuinty aides who have pleaded not guilty, is due Jan. 19 (www.thestar.com) . McGuinty was not under investigation and co-operated with police.

The hard-hitting report by auditor general Bonnie Lysyk (www.thestar.com) blamed lax oversight of electricity companies by the province's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) for the questionable expenses getting through.

Once they were discovered through internal audits, the agency responsible for meeting Ontario's daily electricity needs issued orders for repayment of $169 million against nine power plants.

One company, which operates the Goreway (www.thestar.com) natural gas-fired power plant in Brampton, was fined $10 million and directed to repay $100 million in a 2015 order.

While the Goreway case was revealed in an Ontario Energy Board probe, the IESO says it cannot name the other companies in question because of privacy rules.

The Conservatives and NDP have been calling on the Liberal government to force full repayment (www.thestar.com) of the monies, arguing $92 million of the $260 million cited by Lysyk as outstanding and should be returned to hydro ratepayers.

But IESO vice-president Terry Young has said the $260 million number is "extreme," with $200 million being a more "reasonable" interpretation.

"We aren't going to be taking further action," he told the Star last week, adding the eligibility of some expenses was in dispute, and the agency determined that the costs of litigation were not worth the financial risk.

Police were not called about the ineligible expenses because the IESO has been acting under regulations it established for companies supplying power to the grid in Ontario's electricity marketplace, Young has said.

But Smith, who represents the Belleville-area riding of Prince Edward-Hastings, said the internal rules don't go far enough.

"Abuses by the insiders at these electricity companies, including at the publicly owned Ontario Power Generation, appear to be flagrant, systemic and repeated," his letter to the OPP said.

Smith noted the Liberal government has been warned by the Ontario Energy Board since 2009 about the possibility for companies to exploit the expense rules.

He also said the Wynne administration, which is up for re-election next June 7, "deliberately swept them (the expense abuses) under the rug."

In her report, Lysyk detailed a number of ways ineligible expenses were being reimbursed.

"The ISEO was not reviewing all cost claims submitted by generators before paying," she wrote.

"Generators claimed thousands of dollars for staff car washes, carpet cleaning, road repairs, landscaping, scuba gear and raccoon traps, which have nothing to do with running power equipment on standby."

One unidentified company claimed $175,000 for parkas and coveralls over a two-year period. Goreway's claims included $300,000 for landscaping, $6.5 million for **gas** to fuel a steam **turbine** that does not consume any **gas** and another $17 million for which it had no supporting records, according to the auditor general's report.

Under the **rules**, **power** companies called on to produce **electricity** on short notice to meet peak demand from consumers are entitled to claim only the "incremental costs" involved in being on standby, Lysyk said.

Another way **power** companies got around the **rules** was to shut down their equipment while on standby, only to restart again within two hours.

"This allowed generators to submit their equipment start-up costs," Lysyk's report said. "Running their equipment continuously would have saved money, but generators could not have then submitted the additional start-up costs for reimbursement."

A spokesperson for **Energy** Minister **Glenn Thibeault** said risks of questionable expenses being reimbursed have been "corrected" because the **IESO** has now changed its procedures so that eligible costs must be pre-approved.

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Pressure on Liberals to recoup ineligible expenses filed by Ontario power plants

Mississauga News - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $2,583
Reach: 123300 **Page:** 1

Pressure is building on **Ontario**'s Liberal government to recoup millions more from nine **power** plants caught filing up to $260 million in ineligible expenses, including staff car washes, parkas, scuba gear and raccoon traps.

With only $168 million in repayment orders issued by the province's **Independent Electricity** System Operator, opposition parties insist the remaining $92 million must be recovered.

"This has to go further," Progressive Conservative **energy** critic Todd Smith said Thursday in the wake of a damning auditor general's report into lax oversight and weak investigative capacity.

"These are the types of things that drive people crazy when they're struggling to pay their own **hydro** bills."

New Democrat MPP John Vanthof accused the government of allowing the **electricity** suppliers in question "to defraud hard-working families" through **rates** they pay for **power**.

Adding to the angst is a refusal by the **IESO**, which arranges day-to-day **electricity** supplies to keep the lights on across the province, to name eight of the nine offending companies, the critics said.

Only one, the Goreway **power** plant in Brampton that was fined $10 million and hit with a $100-million repayment order, has been identified because it was named in an investigation by the **Ontario Energy Board**.

Economic Development Minister Brad Duguid said the repayments ordered were subject to settlement negotiations and told reporters "I don't have a problem" with the names of offending companies being made **public**.

But Duguid, standing in for **Energy** Minister **Glenn Thibeault** who had a death in the family, said those decisions are up to the **IESO**.

Factors in the settlement negotiations included disputes between the agency and companies as to how many expenses were ineligible, he added.

"There may not be certainty to that."

IESO vice-president Terry Young told the Star the agency believes the ineligible costs are closer to $200 million, meaning about 85 per cent of the monies have been recovered.

"We thought the $260 million was extreme," he said, referring to the figure in auditor general Bonnie Lysyk's annual report issued Wednesday.

The **IESO** decided the costs of litigation to recover more funds was not worth the financial risks, Young added.

"We aren't going to be taking any further action."

Names of the other eight companies facing repayment orders cannot be released under the **rules** established for participants in **Ontario**'s **energy** market, Young said.

That needs to be changed, Vanthof said.

"The system should be much more transparent."

Thibeault's office issued a statement Thursday saying the repayment orders hinge on the definitions of eligible and ineligible expenses that could be claimed by **power** producers in a program that has since been changed.

"Since **IESO** now pre-approves eligible costs, this risk has been corrected," said Thibeault spokesperson Colin Nekolaichuk.

In her report, the auditor general also faulted **IESO** for having executives from some of the companies on a panel of 23 members studying ways to modernize **Ontario**'s **electricity** market and no **consumer** representation.

"Some of the members that are on the working group are representing companies that have been found . . . to have misused market **rules**," Lysyk wrote.

Goreway executive Rob Coulbeck and Paul Dottori of Rayonier Advanced Materials resigned as co-chairs last week.

Consumer advocate Francesca Dobbyn, executive director of the Bruce Grey United Way in the Owen Sound area, has since been appointed to the panel.

~ Torstar Network

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A damning indictment of private power

Waterloo Region Record · Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Thomas Walkom

Ad Value: $3,888
Reach: 63465 **Page:** A7

The private sector, we are always told, produces low costs and efficiencies.

In many cases, this handy bromide is true.

But as two recent bombshell reports point out, it does not hold in the world of **electricity** generation.

Both the **Ontario Energy Board** and the province's auditor general have produced damning indictments of the Liberal government's **hydro** privatization strategy.

They have found that it's just too easy for the private generating companies to abuse their market **power** - or, as the **OEB** likes to call it, "game" the system.

As reported last week, an **OEB** report estimates that over several years, just one private generator, the Japanese-owned Goreway Station Partnership in Brampton, collected $120 million from the province that it didn't deserve.

Goreway denies that it deliberately did anything wrong.

A day later, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk released another report that calculated gaming by private generators cost the province $300 million over nine years.

In both cases, **electricity** **ratepayers** ultimately footed the bill.

The problem of gaming is endemic to privatized **electricity** markets.

All **electric** generation, whether **public** or private, faces the task of matching supply to ever-changing demand. That requires some generators to be on standby in case there is a sudden spike in the need for **electricity**. And keeping generators on standby costs money.

If generation is **public**, as it was when the former Crown **corporation** known as **Ontario** **Hydro** held a near monopoly, the **utility** can simply be ordered to keep some capacity on standby. There will be a cost. But ordinarily, a **public** **utility** has no incentive to exaggerate this cost.

A private generator does, particularly if it is being reimbursed for its startup and standby expenses.

It is here that the abuse of market **power** can occur.

In **Ontario**'s case, the reimbursements for standby **power** are handled by an arm of government called the **Independent** **Electricity** System Operator. The **IESO** covers the costs incurred when a private generator agrees to start up its turbines and put them on standby.

The easiest way to game that system is to claim costs that are not legitimate.

In the case of Goreway, the **OEB** said the **utility** included in its list of startup costs expenses that it would have incurred anyway, including landscaping, tool boxes and ear muffs.

In one case, according to the **OEB**, Goreway included as part of its startup costs, fuel for a steam-fired cogenerator that used no fuel.

In another, it said, the Brampton **utility** claimed startup costs for a **turbine** that, while off-line, was otherwise fully functioning and did not need to be started up.

In her report, Lysyk said unnamed private generators claimed scuba gear and carpet cleaning as startup costs eligible for reimbursement.

The private generators are not solely to blame for this.

As good profit-maximizers they devote time and attention to making money any legal way they can - including gaming the system.

The OEB report noted tartly that they are often helped in this by government rules that invite abuse.

In one instance, according to the report, a Goreway senior executive sent an ecstatic memo to staff following a new rule change on eligible standby costs.

"Put a bow on it," he wrote. "Christmas came early."

Certainly, the penalties are not onerous for private generators that break the rules.

Lysyk calculates that while nine generators claimed

$260 million worth of ineligible expenses between 2006 and 2015, only $168 million of that has been recovered by government.

She says the government still pays $30 million more per year than it needs to in order to keep generators on standby.

In Goreway's case, the private utility ended up - after repaying $100 million of the $120 million it had made from gaming the system plus a $10 million fine - with a

$10 million profit.

That's private power in a nutshell. It's a great deal for the private power owners. For the rest of us: Not so much.

Thomas Walkom appears in Torstar newspapers.

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When it's broken, Wynne's Liberals don't fix it

Toronto Sun - Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $2,349
Reach: 222184 **Page:** A15

While Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk's annual report on Ontario government blunders in the electricity sector uncovered millions of dollars of waste this year instead of billions, it also revealed something especially disturbing.

That is that electricity regulators haven't fixed easily correctable problems they've known about for up to 15 years, that could have saved Ontarians at least $100 million on their hydro bills and probably more.

True, these numbers pale in comparison to Lysyk's previous findings that, for example, the government is spending $9.2 billion more than necessary over 20 years on inflated prices for wind and solar power because it ignored the advice of its own energy experts.

But Lysyk's findings this year on the operations of the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) and the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), provide insight on why these financial disasters keep happening.

It's that Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberal government, and before her Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government, have failed to fix problems costing Ontarians money on their electricity bills, even in cases where they've been aware of them since they came to power in 2003.

As Lysyk put it: "The IESO has not implemented some important recommendations made by the Ontario Energy Board's Market Surveillance

Panel over the last 15 years that could have saved Ontarians millions of dollars on their **hydro** bills."

Lysyk focused on two programs that compensate **power** generators for their incidental costs, the Standby Cost Recovery Program and the Lost Profit Recovery Program.

The Standby Cost Recovery Program, Lysyk found, continues to pay **natural gas** generators about $30 million per year more than necessary, despite the **OEB** recommending it be scaled back because it's almost never needed.

Lysyk also found that between 2006 and 2015, this program paid out up to $260 million in ineligible expenses to **natural gas** and coal **power** generators - **Ontario** stopped using coal in 2014 - of which only $168 million has been recovered.

That means the **public** paid almost $100 million on their **hydro** bills for claims from **power** generators that had nothing to do with the cost of running **power** equipment on standby, such as staff car washes, carpet cleaning, road repairs, landscaping, scuba gear, raccoon traps, coveralls and parkas.

Lysyk also found the Lost Profit Recovery Program has cost the **public** millions of dollars more - no one's really sure of how much more - because **power** generators and large industrial **electricity** consumers take unfair advantage of it.

This even though the **OEB** warned when the program started in 2002 - the Liberals came to **power** in 2003 - that participants would be able to misuse it to receive payments for lost profits that never actually occurred.

It's one thing for a government to make mistakes and fix them.

The problem with **Ontario**'s Liberal government is that it ignores mistakes even when it knows about them.

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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

GM LOOKING TO BUILD CLEAN-ENERGY PROJECT

The Globe and Mail - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $4,055
Reach: 372649 **Page:** B3

General Motors of Canada Co. is proposing to build a **renewable energy** project at its St. Catharines Propulsion Plant in **Ontario**, a first-of-its-kind endeavour the auto maker estimates will reduce greenhouse **gas** emissions by 77 per cent from the facility.

The project proposes to build a 6.4-megawatt co-generation plant that will use renewable landfill **gas** as fuel to generate **electricity** and recover thermal **energy** to **power** and heat the St.

Catharines plant, which manufactures V-6 and V-8 engines and GF6 transmissions.

GM Canada says that in addition to significantly reducing net greenhouse **gas** emissions the proposed project will also lower **energy** **electrical** costs, improving the facility's long-term competitiveness.

The auto maker says once the project is online in mid-2019, clean **energy** will **power** approximately 32 per cent of the St. Catharines plant - the most of any of GM's global population operations worldwide.

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Co-generation systems aim to save Windsor $1.1M annually

Windsor Star - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Brian Cross

Ad Value: $3,896
Reach: 58088 **Page:** A4

New cogeneration systems that generate electricity and also capture byproduct thermal energy to help with heating are projected to shave $1.1 million annually from the energy bills at three of the city's biggest facilities.

Huron Lodge long-term care home, the WFCU Centre and the Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre have either recently had the systems installed - each costing around $3 million - or are just about to. Resembling a shipping container located outside the buildings, they are called combined heat and power systems, and they're ideally suited to places like these, said Sergio Grando, the city's manager of energy initiatives.

"It's certainly an excellent use of this technology, because this technology works best when you have a reasonable amount of heat requirement in the building," he said.

In the case of the WFCU Centre and the aquatic centre, there's lots of space to heat, plus swimming pools and water attractions with large volumes of water that must be kept warm. At Huron Lodge, large volumes of water have to be heated for bathing and cooking and the thermostat is set pretty high to keep residents comfortable.

"All of this lowers operating cost," Grando said of the projects, coming online in December at Huron Lodge and the WFCU Centre. Bids were still being analyzed for the aquatic centre, with the expectation the system will start operating there in March or April. He said with electricity costs rising dramatically in recent years, the cogeneration systems increasingly make financial sense.

Using natural gas as the fuel, a highly efficient generator produces electricity and the byproduct - thermal energy - is captured to heat the building and water. In the case of the aquatic centre, the system will provide 5.9 million kilowatt hours of the 7.7 million used (and costing $1.14 million) in 2016. It will also take care of 70 per cent of the heating demands for the building, which in 2016 cost $219,000.

The projected annual savings for electricity and heat totals about $500,000, said Grando, whose job is to chip away at the city's energy consumption, which in 2016 cost $18.4 million for electricity, water, natural gas and heat generated by the downtown district energy system. In recent years, the city has also mounted rooftop solar systems on the WFCU Centre, the aquatic centre and the Transit Windsor headquarters.

The estimated $3.1-million cost of the aquatic centre cogeneration system will be partly offset by $1.1 million in provincial incentives tied to climate change initiatives. Similar grants helped pay for the systems at the WFCU Centre and Huron Lodge.

"Anything we can do to wear our green hat to reduce energy consumption and hence create operational savings is essentially what we do," Grando said.

At the WFCU Centre, which recently opened its new pool, the new system will save more than $400,000 a year in heating and electricity costs. The Huron Lodge system will save a little more than $200,000.

"Not every facility is a candidate for this," he added. But the city is continuing to look at other buildings that may benefit, including South Windsor Recreation Complex (recently renamed Capri Pizzeria Recreation Complex), Adie Knox Herman Recreation Complex (which has an ice rink and a pool), and Forest Glade Arena. bcross@postmedia.com

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Is shifting to a carbon tax smart policy, or just politics?

Toronto Star - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn OPINION

Ad Value: $16,804
Reach: 500678 **Page:** A10

The new Progressive Conservative election platform is dressed for success - ambitious and accessible. Also brimming with flash and cash to attract attention.

Unlike past platforms, it is as much progressive as conservative: If Patrick Brown becomes premier, he'll cut taxes for middle-class and low-income earners. (Down with trickle-down economics!)

Where is the money coming from? From us.

To avoid blowing the budget, a PC government would bankroll tax cuts by relying on the cash flow from a new carbon tax that is ultimately rebated right back to taxpayers. In other words, a "revenue neutral" tax shift.

At root, the Tory **plan** is to change the Liberal **climate** change **plan**: Brown would replace a complex **cap-and-trade** regime with a simpler carbon tax.

It may prove to be smart politics, but is it wise **public** policy? Simplicity has its costs and benefits.

If you drive a car or heat a home, the straight PC tax would cost far more for fuel than the current Liberal **plan**. That's bad news when you fill up at the pump (albeit good news for environmentalists if it deters drivers).

The bigger good news is that the money raised from all that carbon consumption in years to come will be rebated through those lower taxes (and child-care rebates). However, that's bad news for environmentalists who were counting on the magnificent multi-billion bounty of carbon revenues being reinvested - not rebated - to reduce greenhouse **gases** with programs such as **energy** retrofits for aging highrises, rapid transit lines and bike lanes.

Brown doesn't buy into those carbon-reducing investments, dismissing them as a "Liberal **Cap-and-Trade** Slush Fund." Hence his shift from slush fund to (tax) refunds.

How much more (or less) the PC **plan** would reduce global warming over time remains a hotly debated point. Suffice to say it's complicated.

Unless you are blessed with X-ray vision, the Liberals' current **cap and trade plan** can seem impenetrable: The government puts a price on carbon, forcing companies to buy and "trade" pollution allowances among themselves (and across borders) to comply with the "cap" on CO2 emissions - hence the clunky "**cap and trade**" term.

A better way to describe **Ontario**'s current policy is "cap and invest" - because it lowers the "cap" on carbon emissions, while repurposing the revenues to "invest" in other green measures that go even further. In that sense, it does double duty by both taxing carbon and reinvesting in carbon abatement.

Both systems are good for the environment, and immensely better than nothing. Considering that their party wouldn't even talk about carbon pricing a few years ago (nor would Brown broach the idea), this counts as progress for the Progressive Conservatives.

You might call it Brown's very own "green shift" - an echo of the infamous Green Shift proposed by then-Liberal leader Stéphane Dion for his controversial carbon tax a decade ago. Back then, Brown served as a backbencher in the federal government of then-PM Stephen Harper, whose party denounced the revenue-neutral Green Shift as a naked tax grab.

Oh, and behind Dion's **plan** back then was his brainy chief of staff, Andrew Bevan - who now happens to hold the same position for Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne at Queen's Park. Today, Bevan has moved on from the Green Shift he helped author to the **cap-and-trade** option he helped design for the provincial government.

And so the shoe has shifted to the other foot for both Brown and Bevan.Who was right then, and who's wrong now?

Both sides have their numbers and projections. But the most relevant question might be whether it's truly worth the trouble of shifting from the current **cap-and-trade** system to a decade-old carbon tax at this stage of the game?

Put another way, is this the best way to fight **climate** change, or is it merely change for change's sake - the best way to fight an election by differentiating the Tory platform from Liberal government policy?

When I put that question to **Ontario**'s **independent** Environmental Commissioner, Dianne Saxe, she stressed her non-partisan role precludes her from commenting on rival party platforms. Speaking conceptually, however, she noted that a carbon tax will undoubtedly "have a much higher impact on both **consumer** bills and business bills ... but I agree with you people don't understand it well."

Cap-and-trade allows for more flexibility and efficiency in **Ontario**'s mixed economy, allowing for smoother transitions and trade-offs for roughly similar outcomes (over time) with less overall disruption, she told me.

"The takeaway is that ... the net economic cost is less with the **cap-and-trade** system," which is why most countries, notably China, are choosing it over the more dated carbon tax.

More to the point, no one else has tried to replace **cap and trade** with a carbon tax in an economy such as ours.

"I did check to see whether it had been done anywhere successfully in the world, and I am told no one has tried it," Saxe said.

Watch the Tories try.

Martin Regg Cohn's political column appears Tuesday, Thursday and

Saturday. mcohn@thestar.ca,

Twitter: @reggcohn

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Liberal promises should cost less

Waterloo Region Record · Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $2,065
Reach: 63465 **Page:** A6

Behind the glowing promises of all the goodies Ontario's Liberals are going to give you lurks the less satisfying and highly costly reality of what the government delivers.

The latest annual report from Ontario Auditor-General Bonnie Lysyk shows this repeatedly and deserves close attention from voters before next spring's provincial election.

To give just one egregious example, the auditor found this government could save $100 million a year if it purchased cheaper generic prescription drugs for people using the health-care system.

Lysyk arrived at that staggering sum of money after concluding Ontario pays up to 70 per cent more per pill than New Zealand for 20 common prescription drugs.

"Opportunities exist for the province to get more discounts on generic drugs," she said.

Some might say $100 million is a mere fraction of the

$5.9 billion the province spent on drugs last year and a drop in the bucket of its $53-billion annual health budget.

But that's no excuse. Every health-care dollar is precious.

This year's provincial budget committed $35 million to increasing stem-cell treatments for Ontarians. It took eight years for the province to approve funds to expand this essential program.

Had it saved the $100 million in prescription drugs that Lysyk red-circled, there might have been more help more quickly for patients requiring stem-cell transplants - or for something else our hospitals so urgently need.

But the $100-million figure is even more arresting in light of one of Premier Kathleen Wynne's more recent promises.

The Liberals' spring budget pledged free prescription medicine to everyone 24 and under, regardless of their household income or whether they have access to private health insurance through their parents.

This is a massive commitment that starts Jan. 1 and is budgeted to cost $465 million a year.

There are strong arguments for expanding public health care this way.

But it is obvious that as the Ontario government dramatically increases drug coverage, it must get the best value possible for every buck it spends.

Its record as a sound fiscal manager, however, is dismal.

Having driven up the cost of electricity by offering ridiculously generous subsidies for wind and solar generation, the province is borrowing billions of dollars more to give Ontarians rebates on their energy bills.

But as all this is happening, the auditor found Ontario ratepayers had to pay more to help cover as much as $260 million in ineligible power generator expenses.

So as Ontario voters consider all the new policies the Liberals are promising, they should remember how hard the Liberals struggle with the policies they've already put in place.

The warts of every government loom large under an auditor's magnifying glass.

Those of a Liberal government that has more than doubled Ontario's debt seem particularly ugly.

However, considering that government advertising hit a 10-year high of $58 million in 2016-17 and the auditor said 30 per cent of the ads seemed intended to make the government look good, it's likely the Liberals will find some makeup to hide those blemishes.

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Guelph hospitals get provincial funds for energy efficiency improvements

GuelphMercury.com - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: jlovell@guelphmercurytribune.com
Reach: 11700

Guelph's hospitals are among those on the receiving end of the province's cap-and-trade program.

Guelph General Hospital (GGH) and St. Joseph's Health Centre are the recipients of a total of nearly $1.5 million from the province toward projects meant to improve energy efficiency at the two hospitals.

"This funding is Climate Change Action Plan funding, and that comes from cap-and-trade revenue," local MPP Liz Sandals said on Friday, speaking to a group of hospital board members and representatives of the Waterloo-Wellington Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) who had gathered in a GGH board room to hear the announcement.

In total, the province's Hospital Energy Efficiency Program is funding 180 projects at 98 hospitals, including 117 heating, ventilation and air conditioning projects; 35 lighting projects; and 28 other projects to address energy efficiency at hospitals, Sandals said.

GGH is getting $951,000 for two projects, while St. Joseph's will get $529,000 for one project. North Wellington Health Care Corporation's Louise Marshall Hospital in Mount Forest is getting $140,000 for two projects.

Sandals stressed that the funding is coming from a different source than other hospital renewal funding provided through the Ministry of Health.

"I want people to understand that this is cap-and-trade money, as opposed to regular ministry funding," she said.

Without going into too much detail about how the cap-and-trade program works, Sandals explained that the money collected through the program must be used for greenhouse gas reduction.

Outside of industrial sources, "the major sources of greenhouse gases in Ontario today are actually inefficient buildings and transit, in one way or another," she said.

In the interests of improving energy efficiency of buildings, the government has done some previous work on upgrades to social housing, and is also working on schools, colleges and universities, she said.

Hospitals are also huge consumers of **energy**, Sandals said.

"Some of that is because hospitals have lots of equipment," she said, noting the equipment performs important functions related to patient care.

"There are also issues with the efficiency of the building itself, and that's something we can do something about," Sandals said.

At GGH, two of four boilers will be replaced and an HVAC system will be upgraded, said board chair Dale Mills, explaining how the hospital will use the funding.

The projects are just the next in a long line of **energy**-related projects the hospital has undertaken over the past several years, he said.

These include upgrades to lighting systems and plumbing, as well as cooling tower replacement, window sealing and more.

"The amount of capital that is required to take care to the whole infrastructure is quite a lot," Mills said.

But, he noted the value of the funding goes beyond just improving **energy** efficiency.

"For a hospital, it really is about patient care, the comfort of our patients, the comfort of our staff," he said.

In Mount Forest, the funded projects will include installing **energy** efficient lights and optimizing the HVAC units, said **North Wellington** Health Care president and CEO Stephen Street.

"It's going to drop our **hydro** bills dramatically," Street said.

Asked whether the efficiencies gained would be enough to offset the rising cost of **hydro**, Street's answer was negative.

These investments will help, but in facilities that operate with some "very **energy**-hungry processes," they may not totally offset increased **energy** costs, he said.

Ontario is investing $64 million this year in the Hospital **Energy** Efficiency Program, a news release from Sandals' office said.

The funded projects are expected to eliminate almost five megatons of carbon dioxide equivalent **gases** from the environment - equal to removing 40,000 vehicles from our roads - by 2050, it said.

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More costs to nuclear power in long run

The Sudbury Star

Sudbury Star - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Stiig Larsen Sudbury

Ad Value: $218
Reach: 114934 **Page:** A10

I would like to reply to Fred Lammi's letter about nuclear **power** ("Nuclear **power** may be our best option," Dec. 7).

I take issue with his claim that nuclear **power** is one of the cheapest sources of **electricity**. Such claims, whatever the source, neglect to mention that costs to construct, perhaps refurbish and ultimately decommission the **power** plants, and to construct and maintain nuclear waste disposal facilities (see the article on said topic in the same issue of The **Sudbury** Star) are not included in the price consumers pay.

Back in the 1970s **hydro** was supposed to be the cheapest source, hence the construction of **electrically** heated homes by the millions and hence the subsequent inclusion on our **hydro** bill of a **debt retirement charge** (now exempted on residential bills at least).

Cheapest? I don't think so.

Stiig Larsen

Sudbury

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Waging war on small businesses; And Wynne's popularity continues to plummet

Ottawa Sun · Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Andre Marin

Ad Value: $1,666
Reach: 38456 **Page:** A5

I just received a notice from the security company monitoring my home.

It laid out the crushing financial pain it's about to endure as a result of the provincial government rushing through a 30% raise to the minimum wage to $15 an hour.

The email was blunt: "By Jan. 1, 2019, it is anticipated that the increase will cost our business more than 32%."

Unfortunately, small businesses like this one will be struggling and the costs will be passed on to consumers. All because Premier Kathleen Wynne wants your vote on June 7, 2018.

But it seems none of the freebies she's thrown at us lately nor the vicious attack ads by Working Families Coalition or Working **Ontario** Women have had any positive impact on her popularity.

According to the latest Forum poll released on December 4, 2017, Wynne, if elected, would be leader of the third party with the New Democratic Party serving as the official opposition and the Progressive Conservatives enjoying a "massive majority."

Wynne's personal popularity over the last year has hovered between a low of 12% and a high of 17%. Now it's at 15%. A staggering 74% say they disapprove of her performance as Premier.

I know the **Ontario** Liberal Party can't just hide Wynne under a desk until the election is over, but the current strategy of pushing her upfront in television ads and the internet is certainly baffling in light of these numbers. People literally bristle at the sound of her name.

Outgoing Deputy Premier Deb Matthews acknowledges featuring the unpopular Wynne as the main preelection prop in a commercial is "an usual strategy."

"I think it's an approach that is different, but as I say, this was the ad that the premier really wanted to run," Matthews said.

She even calls Wynne the party's "greatest asset."

Me thinks Wynne's ego is dictating the agenda. Sure, she's a great campaigner, hard worker, runner who never quits, blah, blah, blah. But a magician she is not. Her ego is exposing the Liberal Party to a disastrous election finish.

Lest we forget, she's facing another great campaigner in Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown who transitioned from a littleknown federal MP to beat the PC establishment's choice of Christine Elliot by selling upwards of 40,000 of the more than 70,000 PC memberships. Now that's called hustling.

Another odd strategy adopted by the fledgling Liberals is to insert the word "**fair**" everywhere they can.

We have the **Fair** **Hydro** **Plan**, the **Fair** Auto Insurance **Plan**, the **Fair** Workplaces, Better Jobs Act and it's "only **fair**" to increase the minimum wage so quickly.

"It's not **fair** that, in an economy on the rise, those who work as hard as anyone else still can't get ahead, so I will never stop fighting for you," Wynne says.

It's as if Wynne is fessing up to how unfair her government has been for the last 14 years. It's a kind of consciousness of guilt. Like someone on their deathbed wanting to make amends before passing away.

Small business owners sure don't feel they're being treated fairly. It doesn't matter how many times Wynne showcases herself everywhere you look repeating it like a broken record.

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Liberal Waste

Ottawa Sun - Sun Dec 10 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Larry Comeau

Ad Value: $223
Reach: 38456 **Page:** A18

Just when I thought the Wynne Liberals could not possibly do more fiscal damage in their mismanagement of the **hydro** file, we find taxpayers have been scammed out of more millions.

Ontario auditor general Bonnie Lysyk is the best friend Ontarians have. Sadly, her scathing reports pinpointing huge fiscal wastes and the total bungling of the **hydro** file have been ignored by the scandalriddled Wynne government.

Wake up Ontarians and give Premier Kathleen Wynne the boot next election, before she totally bankrupts **Ontario**.

LARRY COMEAU

OTTAWA

(So far, the jury is out on whether or not Patrick Brown can, or will, fix this mess.)

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Out of control electricity costs cannot go on

The Sachem - Fri Dec 8 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $65
Reach: 6967 **Page:** 1

For years, I have been railing against the high cost of electricity - full disclosure, I heat with hydro, which means I go through 10 to 20 cords of wood a winter. Ontario now has the fastest-rising electricity costs in North America, and the highest rates in Canada. This cannot go on.

We as Opposition have proposed measures to lower the average hydro bill an additional 12 per cent on top off the existing 25-per-cent reduction.

The annual Hydro One dividend should be rebated to ratepayers instead of using the $350 million a year for government projects. Conservation programs are worthwhile but they should be funded from general revenues.

Under the Green Energy Act, Feed-in Tariff contracts have led to exorbitant subsidies for generating power that is simply not needed or could have been generated in other less expensive ways. We must use every legal and feasible opportunity to renegotiate or exit contracts at every contract breach, whether it be missed operational deadlines or permit violations.

Where feasible, we must walk away from committed capacity contracts that have cancellation benefits, like prenotice to proceed contracts that were struck under the Green Energy Act, thus avoiding already scheduled rate increases.

The Smart Meter Charge is intended to pay for the province's data centre, although the auditor general has found that 812,000 of the 4.8 million homes with smart meters have not transmitted any data. This smart meter charge - at $1 billion over budget - should come off immediately.

Ontario ratepayers are now paying for a CEO who makes over $4 million a year. That's six times what the old CEO at Hydro One used to make. We must reign in exorbitant executive salaries at both Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation.

The C.D. Howe Institute charges Green Energy Act policies have "had a dramatic impact on electricity costs in the province, but they have generated very limited environmental benefits and have had a negligible-to-negative effect on economic growth and employment." As we've been saying since its inception, it's time to repeal the Green Energy Act.

Green energy is a good thing, but paying unaffordable rates for power we don't need and forcing projects on unwilling host municipalities is wrong. As we have said many times in Opposition, we will restore local planning authority over wind and solar and force government to present the environmental impact of their decisions.

Energy planning decisions in Ontario are made by political staff instead of by the energy experts at the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO). Any future long-term energy plans must be brought before a legislative committee to be studied in depth, in public, and with the Minister of Energy and the expert staff at IESO and other core agencies required to give advice or explain their decisions.

Ontario's IESO must be required to report on potential options - rooted in evidence - to reduce the amount of hydroelectric power the province wastes annually.

The Ontario Energy Board must be reformed to reduce red tape, drive costs out of the system, and create a flexible regulatory body.

We should proceed with nuclear refurbishment in Ontario and keep the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station open until 2024.

Fourteen years of mismanagement, recklessness and politically-driven decisions have left families, seniors and business owners paying more. This cannot go on.

Toby Barrett is the MPP for Haldimand-Norfolk

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Bruce Power fined for accident in which worker burned

THE SUN TIMES

Owen Sound Sun Times - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Frances Learment

Ad Value: $344
Reach: 13483 **Page:** A1 / Front

Bruce **Power** Inc. was fined $110,000 for a preventable workplace accident in which a worker was burned when flames erupted as he **drilled** a hole during maintenance on a rotor at the Tiverton plant's non-nuclear side of the No. 8 Generator, Feb 1, 2016.

Justice of the Peace Michael A. Cuthbertson in Owen Sound court Wednesday found that Bruce **Power** Inc. failed as an employer to advise workers of a hazard, contrary to the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

In an agreed statement of facts, the court heard that although the generator maker, GE, had prepared and made available a technical information letter which discussed potential hazards associated with trapped hydrogen **gas**, and recommended a procedure to deal with it, the Bruce **Power** crew working that day did not know to test and purge hydrogen from the line, and not pressurize it before removing the plug to reduce potential sources of ignition.

The court heard this information was not known to the team involved in the work, including the injured worker, and its recommended method was not followed.

Asked in a telephone interview Thursday how the safety information did not get to the workers, James Scongack, Bruce **Power**'s vice president of corporate affairs and environment said "it would have been beneficial in this case, but corrective actions have been put in place to ensure it doesn't repeat again..." A Ministry of Labour investigation found the flames that engulfed the worker resulted from the release of hydrogen from pressurized containment inside a rotor core when it met air from the freshly driven hole and ignited, possibly because of the **drill** motor or a work light.

The worker was treated and returned to work three months later.

Bruce **Power** spokesperson John Peevers said immediately following the incident that Bruce **Power** assessed and identified risks associated with the task and updated the procedure, along with all other relevant maintenance protocols for all other generators.

He said a "Lessons Learned" document about the incident was communicated to all supervisors and **contract** supervisors. A cross-disciplinary team will also deal with any future similar situations.

Bruce **Power** employs 4,500 people. This was the only lost time injury in 2016; there were none in 2015 and one to date in 2017.

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Canadian energy firms fight Trump's coal plan

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

The Globe and Mail - Sat Dec 9 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value: $18,456
Reach: 372649 **Page:** B1

Canadian energy companies have entered a battle over the U.S. electricity market in which natural gas, hydroelectric and renewable-energy providers are opposing Trump administration efforts to favour coal-fired and nuclear generators with premium payments for "reliability."

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry has formally proposed that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) impose rules creating new rate structures under which coal-fired and nuclear electricity generators could recover additional costs from consumers based on their contribution to system reliability.

That's because those generating stations provide baseload power and maintain a 90-day source of fuel on site, unlike those providing electricity from other sources.

This week, recently installed FERC chairman Kevin McIntyre wrote to Mr. Perry, requesting a 30-day extension to consider the proposal, extending a process that was supposed to conclude on Friday.

The energy commission - which can accept or reject the administration's proposal - has received more than 1,500 submissions on it.

Those include comments challenging the rule from Calgarybased Enbridge Inc., which delivers nearly a quarter of all natural gas delivered in the United States, and from the Canadian Electricity Association, which represents major power generators across the country, many of which export electricity to their southern neighbours.

Mr. Perry's request to FERC is part of a broader initiative by President Donald Trump to resuscitate the U.S. coal industry, which has been in decline under the twin pressure of climatechange concerns and competition from low-cost natural gas.

Mr. Trump has also ordered the reversal of the clean-energy plan initiated by his predecessor Barack Obama, which would have set greenhouse gas emissions standards for state power systems, putting more pressure on utilities to retire their coalfired plants ahead of schedule.

The FERC process has created strange bedfellows as the American Petroleum Institute teams up with the American Council on Renewable Energy to oppose the proposed rules favouring coal and nuclear generation.

In a submission to FERC, Enbridge argued natural gaspowered generation is equally effective in supporting the resilience of the power system.

"The proposed rule offers an unreasonable 'solution' that would not fix the problem," Enbridge said in its submission.

"By arbitrarily favouring coalfired and nuclear generators … over generators using other reliable fuel sources, the proposed rule would undermine competitive electric markets." The Canadian Electricity Association urged FERC to have a full review. The association argued the U.S. regulator should consider imports from Canada as a key component of grid reliability, noting hydroelectricity from Canada is used to backstop intermittent sources, such as wind power. Public- and investorowned companies, such as Manitoba Hydro, Hydro-Quebec, Emera Inc. and Fortis Inc. have made - or are proposing - multibilliondollar investments to bring Canadian power to U.S. markets.

The Department of Energy's proposals to FERC could distort the market by making it less efficient and drive up consumer costs, Canadian Electricity Association chief executive officer Sergio Marchi said on Friday.

"Notwithstanding that [the proposed rule] will extend the life of some coal and nuclear assets, it is our belief that exports of **Canadian electricity** will continued to increase in the years ahead, driven by strong **regional** demand for affordable, reliable, clean **power**," Mr. Marchi said in an e-mailed statement.

Coal and nuclear **power** generators say they have a tough time competing against new sources of **power** that provide no reliability to the grid and often benefit from state renewable mandates or subsidies.

About 80 per cent of the 18 gigawatts of **electricity** capacity that was shut down in 2015 was coal-fired **power**, the Department of **Energy** said in a report that backed up Mr. Perry's proposal. And another 12.7 gigawatts of coal generation is expected to be retired by 2020.

FirstEnergy Corp. of Ohio has unsuccessfully pressed its state **Public Utilities** Commission for special payments to save its two nuclear plants. FirstEnergy also has a number of coal-fired plants. The coal is supplied by Murray **Energy** Corp., a mining company owned by Bob Murray, a backer of Mr. Trump.

In its submission to FERC, FirstEnergy said the administration's proposal is aimed at "preserving generation assets with resiliency attributes ... before they are lost forever, so that the grid stays reliable and resilient in the future."

Resources for the Future, a Washington think tank, estimated the proposed **rules** would prevent the retirement of 25 gigawatts of coal-fired **power** and 20 gigawatts of nuclear between 2020 and 2045. It would cost Americans $72-billion (U.S.) between now and 2045, while generating companies would reap $28-billion in benefits.

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B.C.'s Premier John Horgan to announce decision on Site C hydroelectric dam

Financial Post - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: The Canadian Press
Reach: 607500

VICTORIA - British Columbia Premier John Horgan will be giving his government's decision on the future of the controversial Site C hydroelectric dam this morning.

The New Democrat government has been debating whether to continue the construction of the $8.3-billion dam or cancel the work midway through the job.

The B.C. **Utilities** Commission, an **independent energy regulator**, concluded in its assessment that the dam is over budget and behind schedule.

The dam has been marked by deeply divisive approaches to environmental, economic, technological and Indigenous concerns that have become the front lines of political battles in B.C.

An estimated $4 billion has been spent so far on the dam that has been under construction for more than two years.

B.C. **Hydro**, the province's **public utility**, has said more than 2,000 people are working on Site C, which is in the Peace **River** area near **Fort** St. John.

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Alberta's power grid to get green boost as auction bidders revealed

The Globe and Mail - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: JEFF LEWIS

Ad Value: $14,718
Reach: 309154 **Page:** B1

Alberta is set to unveil successful bidders for 400 megawatts of **renewable energy** projects in a major step by the oil-rich province toward transforming its **power** grid.

The province will announce results of a competition under its marquee **renewable-energy** program as early as Wednesday in Calgary, in the first of several such auctions planned as part of a massive overhaul of its **electricity** system.

The added capacity marks a big **leap** for a province keen to jump-start investment in up to 5,000 megawatts of **renewable energy** by 2030, and shift away from its long reliance on **coal-fired electricity**.

NDP Premier Rachel Notley is especially eager to spur investment in **solar** and **wind** resources as the province emerges from a three-year rout in crude prices that has plunged it into deficit and led to tens of thousands of job losses in the dominant oil industry.

A year ago, Alberta introduced sweeping changes to the grid - including supply contracts backstopped by the government - in a bid to make it easier for such intermittent **power** to compete.

Suncor **Energy** Inc., TransAlta Corp. and BluEarth Renewables Inc. were among dozens of domestic and international companies that submitted expressions of interest to the Alberta **Electric** System Operator for the program.

Other interested parties included EDF EN Canada, Algonquin **Power** Corp. and Capital **Power** Corp.

A total of 29 projects qualified for the request for proposal stage, representing 10 times the target capacity of 400 megawatts, according to the province.

The results of the auction will be closely parsed for insight into the quality of Alberta's renewable resources and current costs for renewable **power** development in the province, said Kent Howie, a partner at Borden Ladner Gervais LLP in Calgary.

Contracts awarded by the government will effectively lock in a set price the successful bidder will receive for all the **electricity** generated by its project over 20 years, he said.

"This will essentially be the most recent price discovery of what the cheapest renewable **power** costs in Alberta, so a lot of people are watching to see what the prices are going to be," he said by phone.

"I think they're also going to be watching closely to see who wins this, and whether it's generators with existing facilities in the province, or whether there will be new entrants into the market."

Alberta, known more for its vast oil-sands deposits, is seeking to lure billions in investment needed to meet an ambitious target of generating one-third of its **electricity** from renewable **power** by 2030, with the rest from **natural gas**.

To accelerate the switch, the province last year committed to $1.36-billion in compensation for major **power** producers in exchange for mothballing coal units years ahead of schedule.

Meanwhile, a provincewide carbon tax will jump to $30 a tonne starting Jan. 1.

Changes also include toughened **rules** targeting heavy emitters in the oil sands, stoking concerns about the province's overall competitiveness. Nevertheless, some companies are poised to reap benefits.

Last week, TransAlta said it would accelerate, by one year, plans to convert some of its coal-fired generating units in the province to run on **natural gas**. The company is also studying a $2.5-billion **hydro**-storage project at its existing Brazeau complex southwest of Edmonton.

Chief executive officer Dawn Farrell praised the new **rules** and said that the company stands to generate annual carbon credits worth $30-million to $50-million from its existing fleet of renewable assets, helping offset compliance costs at its **natural-gas** and coal-fired units.

Wind developers say such trade-offs provide opportunities to partner and trade credits with large emitters, especially as costs for new generation decline.

"I think people are really going to actually be surprised at how competitive **wind** is with everything else, especially here in Alberta," said Evan Wilson, a Calgary-based **regional** director for the **Canadian Wind Energy** Association.

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