Infomart Newsletters

From: Infomart Newsletters
Sent: December 14, 2017 7:44 AM
To: Rosemarie Leclair
Subject: Morning News Clippings - Thursday, December 14, 2017

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Morning News Clippings

powered by: infomart

Date: Thursday, December 14, 2017
Edited by: Tara Brautigam (Tara.Brautigam@oeb.ca)

Contact Editor

Clippings Summary

News - 20 Results

Privatization of Hydro One shields millions in green-energy spending from public scrutiny

ottawacitizen.com - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Vito Pilieci
Reach: 146400

The privatization of Ontario's largest **power** **utility** has left the province with a major blind spot: The **public** is no longer able to scrutinize millions of dollars consumers are paying for green **energy**. ...

People Lose Power; Over Hydro One; Privatization of electricity brings down curtain on oversight

Ottawa Sun - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Vito Pilieci

Ad Value: $4,045
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A8

The privatization of Ontario's largest **power** **utility** has left the province with a major blind spot: The **public** is no longer able to scrutinize millions of dollars consumers are paying for green **energy**. ...

Grits ordered rate-cut advertising: Horwath

Ottawa Sun - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $819
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A9

Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath says the provincial government ordered hydro distribution companies to place partisan messages on customers'bills that advertise the Liberals'plan to cut electricity ...

Ontario Liberals ordered hydro firms to advertise rate-cut plan on bills: NDP

Ottawa Citizen - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: $1,745
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A7

The Ontario government ordered hydro distribution companies to place partisan messages on customers'bills that advertise the Liberals'plan to cut electricity rates, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath ...

Rebates for green renos; New program will encourage homeowners to complete energyefficient renovations

Niagara Falls Review - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: $303
Reach: 18119 **Page:** A17

Homeowners who complete energy-efficient renovations will be eligible for thousands of dollars in rebates under a new program announced by Ontario's environment minister Wednesday. Chris Ballard said the government will use $600 million ...

Ontario offering thousands in rebates for energy-efficient home renovations

CBC News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

The province will offer thousands of dollars in rebates for homeowners who opt for energy-efficient renovations, including windows and insulation, the Ontario government said Wednesday.

Councillors vote in favour of Guelph Hydro merger

GuelphMercury.com - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: gmcnaughton@guelphmercurytribune.com
Reach: 11700

After more than six hours of delegations, questions and comments, Guelph councillors have voted in favour of merging Guelph Hydro with Alectra. The vote, which did not come until well after midnight Thursday, ...

Carbon tax is better than cap and trade ; Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12

Toronto Star - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $7,522
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A24

Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12 Martin Regg Cohn dismisses Conservative Leader Patrick Brown's carbon **plan** as "change for the sake of change." In fact, much like the Liberal government's green-**energy** fiasco, ...

Terence Corcoran: Another 'green' power boondoggle sinks taxpayers and consumers in the red

Financial Post - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Terence Corcoran
Reach: 607500

From Bonavista to Vancouver Island, from the Arctic Circle to the Great Lake waters, this land really belongs to **electric**-**power** monopolies and politicians who routinely bulldoze property rights, **ratepayers**, taxpayers ...

Algoma emissions 'aggressively'cut

Sault Ste. Marie This Week - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Sara Mccleary
Page: A1 / Front

Algoma held an open house last week to show off its pollution abatement program. Community Environmental Open House focused on cokemaking emissions, which have dramatically decreased since the federal government put new limits and ...

Pickering nuclear exercise takes place day auditor general slams emergency planning

Pickering News Advertiser - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $1,267
Reach: 51400 **Page:** 1

PICKERING - The emergency exercise conducted at the Pickering nuclear generating station last week took place the same day the **Ontario** auditor general's report found the province is not prepared for a large-scale emergency. The ...

No safety incidents since Darlington refurb workers sent home

Clarington This Week - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $57
Reach: 51830 **Page:** 1

CLARINGTON - The number of low-level safety issues at the **Ontario Power Generation** Darlington Refurbishment project has been reduced since a concerning trend prompted a safety stand down that sent workers home in ...

KincardineNews

Twolan passes Bruce County warden torch to Arran-Elderslie mayor Eagleson

Kincardine News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Don Crosby
Page: A9

Arran-Elderslie Mayor Paul Eagleson was acclaimed warden of Bruce County Dec. 7 during the 2018 inaugural council session. Eagleson, who was warden 1995, said it was a honour not only to sit at the head of county council but to be acclaimed by ...

KincardineNews

Bruce Power fined $110,000 for workplace injury

Kincardine News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Frances Learment
Page: A8

Bruce **Power** Inc. was fined $110,000 for a preventable workplace accident that burned a worker 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, ...

Pipeline bottlenecks push Canadian oil price to deepest discount in 4 years

CBC News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

The price gap between the price of Canada's oil benchmark versus its U.S. equivalent, West Texas Intermediate, has widened to its biggest difference in almost four years, with Canadian crude now selling at a $25 discount.

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

Federal plan aims to reduce carbon content in fossil fuels

The Globe and Mail - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value: $11,843
Reach: 309154 **Page:** B3

The federal government is moving to implement regulations to require all providers of fossilfuel **energy** to reduce the carbon content of their **fuels** as part of its effort to meet Canada's targets for greenhouse **gas** ...

NP

Federal clean fuel standard to require emissions cuts across the board

News - National Post - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Maura Forrest
Reach: 607500

OTTAWA - The federal government has released its **plan** for a clean fuel standard, which it calls "the single largest emission-reduction policy in Canada's **climate** and clean-growth **plan**." The new standard ...

Ribbon cut for battery storage facility; Festival Hydro hosts grand-opening ceremony for Canada's largest battery storage facility

Stratford Beacon-Herald - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Galen Simmons

Ad Value: $577
Reach: 10143 **Page:** A3

It's not up and running yet, but by the time everyone gets back from holidays, the four lithium ion battery cell arrays will be ready to take the pressure off Stratford's **power** grid in the city's industrial south end. During a grand ...

Province ignores high cost of gas, energy, car insurance

Sudbury Star - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: John Oattes

Ad Value: $334
Reach: 14934 **Page:** A10

Recently, a family member came up from **Ottawa** to help us get ready for winter. He was thunderstruck by the outrageous price of **gasoline** here in the city and wondered why there were no complaints about it. Oh, I said, there ...

Your letters: Carbon tax is better than cap and trade

thestar.com - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative **Reach:** 999000

Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12 Martin Regg Cohn dismisses Conservative Leader Patrick Brown's carbon **plan** as "change for the sake of change." In fact, much like the Liberal government's green-**energy** fiasco, ...

Clippings Summary

Full Articles

Privatization of Hydro One shields millions in green-energy spending from public scrutiny

ottawacitizen.com - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Vito Pilieci
Reach: 146400

The privatization of **Ontario**'s largest **power** **utility** has left the province with a major blind spot: The **public** is no longer able to scrutinize millions of dollars consumers are paying for green **energy**.

It's a situation that shows "nobody is minding the store" when it comes to keeping track of much of **Ontario**'s **solar** **energy** production, one expert says.

At the heart of the issue is a simple question: Are **energy** producers who are paid to feed the **Ontario** grid with **solar** **power** being given an opportunity to milk the system?

The province says that's not the case, but critics are questioning what they see as a lack of the oversight.

Here's how it works. Businesses and residences that generate their own solar electricity and feed it into Ontario's power grid are under contract to generate a specific amount of energy.

New technology is capable of allowing some to more easily ramp up their production and to increase their output by as much as 40 per cent. Currently producers are being paid between 20 and just over 80 cents per kilowatt hour, depending on when they signed their contracts with the province.

Oversight is needed to make sure these FIT (Feed-In Tariff) and MicroFit producers, as they are called, are not feeding the grid excess power.

Costs for such excess power are invariably passed on, in some form, to consumers.

Hydro towers.

Ontario's power system is governed by a web of bodies, including the Crown corporation Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), the provincially appointed Ontario Energy Board (OEB) and local distribution companies. The largest of the distribution companies is Hydro One, which manages 39 per cent of the FIT and MicroFIT contracts on behalf of the province.

So who makes sure the green energy producers aren't oversupplying - and therefore overbilling - the system?

Tara Brautigam, a spokesman with the Ontario Energy Board, says the OEB is not responsible for regular monitoring of those contracts.

"The IESO administers or operates the wholesale electricity market, not the OEB. Similarly, the IESO enters into and administers FIT contracts," said Brautigam.

The IESO, meanwhile, said that while, yes, it is responsible for the province's electricity market, it does not track the amount of money paid to individual green power generators on a regular basis to ensure those businesses are not overproducing.

According to its website, the IESO says it monitors all energy input in the province every five minutes. However, when asked about FIT contracts specifically, it backed away from that statement.

"Each project is individually metered and settled by the (local distribution company)," said John Cannella, a spokesman for the IESO. "Hydro One is responsible for metering and settling FIT contracts in their service territory, as other (local distribution companies) are responsible for the ones in their respective service territories."

However, when the Liberal government initiated the sale of 51 per cent of Hydro One in 2015, the utility changed from being a transparent Crown corporation to a publicly traded, for-profit business.

And that appears to have been a game-changer.

wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) data-orig-size="1000,750" data-comments -opened="1" data-image-meta="{"aperture":"5","credit":"Darcy Cheek\/Brockville Recorder and Times","camera":"Canon EOS 6D","caption":"A Hydro One smart meter at a property near Algonquin, Ont. File photo\/Postmedia Network ORG XMIT: POS1511021406000936","created_timestamp":"0","copyright":"QMI Agency","focal_length":"200","iso":"200","shutter_speed":"0.003125","title":"<>","orientation":"1"}" data-image-title="011216-<>-0113_col_egan -W.jpg" data-image-description="

A Hydro One smart meter at a property near Algonquin, Ont. File photo/Postmedia Network ORG XMIT: POS1511021406000936

" data-medium -file=" (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) data-large-file=" (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) class="size-full wp-image -945370" src=" (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) alt="" srcset=" (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) 640w, (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) 111w, (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) 300w, (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) 768w, (wpmedia.ottawacitizen.com) 1000w" sizes="(max-width: 640px) 100vw, 640px" >

A **Hydro** One **smart meter**.

As part of that transformation, **Hydro** One says it is no longer required to comply with freedom of information laws. As a result, how **Hydro** One is managing those green **energy** contracts is subjected to very little **public** scrutiny.

The **utility** is also no longer responsible for providing information to the province's auditor general. A spokeswoman for the auditor general's office pointed to the office's 2015 report in which the auditor general, Bonnie Lysyk, highlighted that the sale of **Hydro** One to private interests would remove any oversight into the **utility**'s operations.

Already the **utility**'s executives have disappeared from the province's **public**-sector salary disclosure data, more commonly known as the Sunshine List, which details provincial employees who earn more than $100,000 annually.

Hydro One confirmed that while it does monitor the **energy** production and pay thousands of FIT and **MicroFit** producers across the province, it is no longer able to share any information about those contracts publicly.

"We aren't able to provide the **customer** information," said Tiziana Baccega Rosa, a spokeswoman for **Hydro** One while explaining that **Hydro** One is no longer bound by the province's information sharing laws.

"All local **distribution** companies ... meter the generators' hourly output and pay them monthly for the exact kWh (kilowatt hours) they produce. The local **distribution** company then bills the **IESO** monthly for all of the embedded generation that was paid out that month. This is the process set by the **IESO** and the local **distribution** company can be audited at any time."

Baccega Rosa said it is in **Hydro** One's best interest to monitor the contracts to ensure that producers aren't overproducing **energy**, as overproduction could damage components of the province's **electrical** grid.

However, increased **energy** **transportation** across the province's **electrical** grid would, as a matter of fact, also allow the privately held **Hydro** One to charge **ratepayers** more in **transmission** costs.

The **IESO**, meanwhile, said it has conducted 400 audits of green **energy** producers, representing about 10 per cent of all FIT **contract** holders. None of those was found to be overproducing.

But there is evidence that overproduction of **energy** is a real issue for **Ontario**.

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A study the **Ontario** Society of Professional Engineers released last month estimated that in 2016 alone, **Ontario** lost between $384 million and $675 million on clean **energy** exports due to an oversupply.

In other words, after paying millions of dollars to generate the **power**, Ontarians paid millions more to get rid of the green **electricity** because the province didn't need it.

The auditor general has also complained about the issue.

Between 2009 and 2014, **Ontario** exported 95.1 million megawatt hours (MWh) of **power** to other jurisdictions, including New York and Michigan. The province lost as much as $3.1 billion by exporting that **power**

"We have confidence in both the Independent System Operator (IESO) and the Ontario Energy Board to ensure that our renewables contracts are being managed appropriately," said Colin Nekolaichuk, a spokesman for Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault.

"The IESO ensures that projects are constructed within the proper parameters, and local utilities ensure that those contracts are operated within the terms of their contract."

Nekolaichuk confirmed that the rules have changed for Hydro One.

"Publicly traded companies are subject to different requirements from Crown corporations. No publicly traded company in Ontario, including Hydro One, is subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act," he said. "Hydro One will continue to be governed by Ontario laws, including the Business Corporations Act and the Securities Act and will continue filing information with the Ontario Securities Commission."

Critics slammed the response.

"That's what happens when you break up this system. Now, nobody is minding the store," said Steve Aplin, an energy environment data specialist with website Emmissiontrak. "It's outrageous that the IESO, they send the cheques. You don't just blindly send a cheque off to somebody. There must be some fiduciary responsibility."

Todd Smith, MPP for Prince Edward-Hastings and PC Energy Critic, said the inability to pull back the curtain on Hydro One and request specific records regarding the payments it's been making on behalf of Ontario ratepayers is "alarming."

"If the same kind of thing is occurring for the 27,000 generators as a result of the FIT program and the Green Energy Act, and nobody is actually checking to see if they are billing for ineligible costs or over billing, that's alarming," he said. "I can't believe there is no AG (auditor general) oversight, there is nothing FOI-able (Freedom of Information Act) for Hydro One. This is really bad."

Smith's comments were supported by Michael Mantha, NDP MPP for Algoma-Manitoulin, who called the decision to sell off a majority of Hydro One "wrong-headed."

"There is one of the biggest problems that we had with this government taking the route to continuing the wrong-headed decision of privatization," he said. "Big private companies take advantage of opportunities that are there. In order for us to have greater control and greater say, why did we go down the avenue of selling our biggest asset?"

vpilieci@postmedia.com(mailto:vpilieci@postmedia.com)

Back to Top

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Ottawa Sun - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Vito Pilieci

Ad Value: $4,045
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A8

The privatization of Ontario's largest power utility has left the province with a major blind spot: The public is no longer able to scrutinize millions of dollars consumers are paying for green energy.

It's a situation that shows "nobody is minding the store" when it comes to keeping track of much of Ontario's solar energy production, one expert says.

At the heart of the issue is a simple question: Are energy producers who are paid to feed the Ontario grid with solar power being given an opportunity to milk the system? The province says that's not the case, but critics are questioning what they see as a lack of the oversight.

Here's how it works.

Businesses and residences that generate their own **solar** **electricity** and feed it into **Ontario**'s **power** grid are under **contract** to generate a specific amount of **energy**.

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Costs for such excess **power** are invariably passed on, in some form, to consumers.

Ontario's **power** system is governed by a web of bodies, including the Crown **corporation** **Independent** **Electricity** System Operator (**IESO**), the provincially appointed **Ontario Energy Board** (**OEB**) and local **distribution** companies. The largest of the **distribution** companies is **Hydro** One, which manages 39% of the FIT and **MicroFIT** contracts on behalf of the province.

So who makes sure the green **energy** producers aren't oversupplying - and therefore overbilling - the system? Tara Brautigam, a spokesman with the **Ontario Energy Board**, says the **OEB** is not responsible for regular monitoring of those contracts.

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Smith's comments were supported by Michael Mantha, NDP MPP for **Algoma**-Manitoulin, who called the decision to sell off a majority of **Hydro** One "wrong-headed."

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Back to Top

Grits ordered rate-cut advertising: Horwath

Ottawa Sun - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $819
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A9

Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath says the provincial government ordered **hydro** **distribution** companies to place partisan messages on customers'bills that advertise the Liberals'**plan** to cut **electricity** **rates**.

Horwath says the order, signed by **Energy** Minister **Glenn Thibeault** and deputy premier Deb Matthews, said the messages promoting the government's **Fair** **Hydro** **Plan** were to appear on bills from July 2017 to July 2018, a period that ends a month after the next provincial election.

Horwath says the order to the companies dictated the precise wording of the messages.

Earlier this year, a **distribution** company in **Niagara**-onthe-Lake complained that the government was politicizing **utility** bills with the order.

The Liberal government announced a **plan** to cut **hydro** **rates** by 25% last spring following months of **public** outcry over rising bills.

Thibeault says the messaging was meant to help **ratepayers** understand their bills.

Back to Top

Ontario Liberals ordered hydro firms to advertise rate-cut plan on bills: NDP

Ottawa Citizen - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: $1,745
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A7

The **Ontario** government ordered **hydro distribution** companies to place partisan messages on customers'bills that advertise the Liberals'**plan** to cut **electricity rates**, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said Wednesday.

Horwath said the order, signed by **Energy** Minister **Glenn Thibeault** and deputy premier Deb Matthews on June 15, instructed companies that the messages promoting the government's **Fair Hydro Plan** were to appear on bills from July 2017 to July 2018, a period which ends a month after the next provincial election.

The order dictated the precise wording of the messages and is a "heavy-handed" way to advertise a Liberal **plan** on the cheap, she said.

"It's a desperate attempt by this government to reach Ontarians and try to show themselves in a better light," said Horwath.

The messages should inform customers that the government's **hydro plan** "substantially lowers **electricity** bills for typical residential customers," says the order, obtained by the New Democrats. They should also include an insert that has the **Ontario** government trillium logo in a "reasonably prominent place" along with the words "**Ontario**'s **Fair Hydro Plan**" and "Bringing **electricity** bills down".

Thibeault says the messaging was meant to help **ratepayers** understand their bills.

"It's (about) trying to make sure people understand clearly what their bills are all about," he said. "Sometimes we treat people like they're **energy** experts rather than just trying to understand their bill."

Back to Top

Rebates for green renos; New program will encourage homeowners to complete energyefficient renovations

Niagara Falls Review - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: $303
Reach: 18119 **Page:** A17

Homeowners who complete **energy**-efficient renovations will be eligible for thousands of dollars in rebates under a new program announced by **Ontario**'s environment minister Wednesday.

Chris Ballard said the government will use $600 million over four years from **cap-and-trade** proceeds to establish the **rebate** program through a provincial agency called the Green **Ontario** Fund.

The program offers up to a $7,200 **rebate** for new insulation, up to $5,000 for new windows, and up to $20,000 for new ground source heat pumps.

"Those funds are being re-invested in programs like this where we're helping business, we're helping homeowners fight **climate** change and save money," Ballard said.

The program launched online Wednesday at GreenOn.ca. In order to access the rebates, homeowners must hire a contractor who has been screened by the Green **Ontario** Fund.

The new program comes after an August commitment to provide thousands of free smart thermostats to homeowners, a promise that Ballard acknowledged has rolled out more slowly than the government would have liked. Only 1,000 of the devices have been installed to date.

"The response was overwhelming," he said. "We've upped that now. We're going to be installing by springtime 140,000 thermostats. It's a matter of making sure we have the qualified installers."

Ballard also used the announcement to take a shot at Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown's **plan** to scrap **cap and trade** if the Tories win the election next spring and replace it with a carbon tax system.

"All of it would be lost if the province were to adopt a Brown carbon tax," he said. "Their program doesn't invest in **Ontario**."

PC finance critic Vic Fedeli said the minister's claim isn't correct, adding that the Tory **plan** would maintain all existing Liberal spending, including the program announced Wednesday.

Back to Top

Ontario offering thousands in rebates for energy-efficient home renovations

CBC News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral

The province will offer thousands of dollars in rebates for homeowners who opt for energy-efficient renovations, including windows and insulation, the Ontario government said Wednesday.

Back to Top

Councillors vote in favour of Guelph Hydro merger

GuelphMercury.com - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: gmcnaughton@guelphmercurytribune.com
Reach: 11700

After more than six hours of delegations, questions and comments, **Guelph** councillors have voted in favour of merging **Guelph Hydro** with Alectra.

The vote, which did not come until well after midnight Thursday, finished 10-3, with Councillors Bob Bell, Phil Allt and James Gordon voting against.

With comments closing out the meeting, many councillors spoke about their initial reluctance to a merger, but came around to supporting it once they saw the facts on the table. One big concern was that **Guelph Hydro** joining the Alectra fold was the first step towards privatization.

However, based on the information provided by staff, most put that concern aside.

" This is the exact opposite of privatization," Councillor Dan Gibson, who initially voted against exploring a merger earlier this year, said.

"Stronger together is often used as a catch phrase during campaigns, but I agree with it."

Mayor Cam Guthrie said his support for the merger came from a concern that, should it not be done, **Guelph** could be in a position down the road where it needs to seek a larger partner for its **electricity**-generation needs and be left out in the cold.

"And then we're putting up our, saying what about us, and then it's too late. Then that center is somewhere else, and we lost our opportunity," the mayor said, adding that the merger is, in the long run, a move to protect jobs.

Before calling the vote on the merger, Guthrie quoted author Roy T. Bennett: "Do what is right, not what is easy nor what is popular."

However, the information put forward by staff and consultants was not enough to sway all councillors.

"I very rarely believe that bigger is better," Bell said, adding he would have preferred to have seen **Guelph Hydro** merge with a smaller **utility** or **utilities** like those in **Waterloo** Region.

"I would much prefer to merge with someone of an equal size, and that was my hope, and I think smaller companies, smaller entities innovate much better than larger ones do."

With council now approving the merger, Alectra will work with **Guelph Hydro**, GMHI and the city's solicitor on a merger participation agreement (MPA), with any potential issues being resolved without returning to council.

This deal is expected to be completed by February. When that happens, GMHI and Alectra would be legally obligated to merge, subject to the terms of that agreement.

After this, GMHI and Alectra would make Mergers, Acquisitions, Amalgamations and Divestitures (MAADs) **application** to the **Ontario Energy Board** (**OEB**). According to the staff report, that **application** would be made in March 2018, with approval coming by the fall.

After the **OEB** gives its thumbs up, the merger would be closed. It is anticipated that the closing would happen on the first day of 2019. Until that is done, **Guelph Hydro** would operate as it had before, subject to any obligations it has under the MPA with Alectra.

A full house

City hall was packed for the marathon session of council, with the merger being the sole item on the agenda.

The delegation list, sitting at more than 30 names long, featured names ranging from the president of Alectra to the mayor of Barrie to the head of the **Greater Toronto** Airport Authority recommending the merger.

"Bigger has been better for us. Mergers work," Mayor Jeff Lehman of Barrie said.

Lehman also pointed to IBM's $90-million data center in the city, saying the company chose Barrie as one of the major needs for it was a reliable source of **power**, and the city had that.

Barrie is no stranger to merged **utilities**. In 2009, Barrie **Hydro** merged with **Powerstream**, which provided **power** to Markham and Vaughan. **Powerstream** was one of the three companies that joined forces to form Alectra.

Also speaking in favour of the delegation was Rossana Broderick, who was a human resources director with Brampton **Hydro**, the company bought out by

Alectra late last year. She currently works for Alectra as the director of change management and communications - a position created after her previous employer was bought out.

"Many of my friends and coworkers from Brampton have robust careers at Alectra, and our careers are better off," she said.

"Our customers and community remained priority number one."

Broderick said the fears and concerns of her coworkers when the purchase was first announced, such as layoffs or a lower standing in the company, did not come to fruition.

"What I have seen over the last year is that my Brampton coworkers and friends are better off than they were in the past," she said.

However, the vast majority were people listing their grievances against such a move.

Dan Bertens, the unit chair for **Guelph Hydro** with IBEW Local 636, the union representing the **utility**'s workers, said that based on the city's communications during the process, the end goal of merging with Alectra had already been decided.

"The city is trying to sell this merger to the city of **Guelph**, not giving them an unobstructed look," Bertens said of the city's various communications, be it through social media or elsewhere, since the prospective merger with Alectra was announced in October, later adding that the survey questions that showed a **public** support of the deal were worded with the intent of getting that sort of response.

Bertens also questioned why the city was trying to rush this deal, with less than two weeks between the staff report on the merger being made **public** and the meeting deciding the fate of a merger.

"The citizens of **Guelph** had just 12 days to go through a 245-page document," he said.

"Where is the transparency there?"

Other delegates questioned why a merger with Alectra was explored, as opposed to smaller neighbouring **utilities**, such as those to the **west** in **Waterloo** Region.

One delegate, Rosemary Peddie, called the overall process too secretive, and questioned why only Alectra as a merger partner was announced while other prospective partners were kept out of the pubic eye.

"If this merger is really going to benefit **Guelph**, why was it so secretive?" she said.

"At the very least, we should have been told who the other **utilities** under consideration were."

Speaking with the Mercury Tribune earlier this month, Derrick Thomson, the city's chief administrative officer, said the names of the other prospective merger partners were being kept confidential due to the information that was shared between the **utilities** - some of it being proprietary - during the exploratory phase of the merger process.

Isseiah Berhane, who works for **Guelph Hydro**, said the staff report was dishonest, saying that its claims of improved **customer service** were unfounded. He pointed to the claim that Alectra would bring with it a 24/7 **customer** support **centre** - however, Berhane says **Guelph Hydro** is already staffed around the clock and will respond to calls at all hours.

Berhane also criticized the report's assertion that, due to Alectra's size, there would be increased resources to restore **power** during major storms. However, with **Guelph** being close to other centers that would likely be hit by the same weather, Berhane says the city could be forced to take a back seat while more densely populated Alectra areas, such as Mississauga or Hamilton, are given priority.

Back to Top

Carbon tax is better than cap and trade; Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12

Toronto Star - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $7,522
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A24

Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12

Martin Regg Cohn dismisses Conservative Leader Patrick Brown's carbon **plan** as "change for the sake of change." In fact, much like the Liberal government's green-**energy** fiasco, we should be cutting our losses before more damage is done.

Before the Liberal **cap and trade plan** becomes yet another expensive boondoggle, we would be wise to objectively **review** what's gone on in Europe. The aptly named European Trading Scheme (ETS) has been active for 12 years and is now undergoing serious reform - an acknowledgement of its failure to have any meaningful effect on reducing CO2 emissions. It remains to be seen if the reforms will have the desired impact.

Cap and trade is so complex that it's virtually impossible to grasp the complete picture and, not surprisingly, it's easy to get it wrong. If the cap is not high enough, it becomes a bureaucratic process that accomplishes nothing. If too many carbon credits are on the market, the price of these allowances plummets and companies lose the incentive to reduce emissions. This was one of the primary factors in the failure of the ETS.

The worst element of **cap and trade** might be the direction of all revenues into so-called "green" projects. These are projects that should be funded through responsible prioritization of tax revenues - but instead, they'll be used to buy votes with more government programs - creating a sleight-of-hand fiscal imbalance. The complexity of the **cap and trade** market - as already demonstrated in Europe - is ripe for manipulation, if not outright corruption.

Brown proposes a revenue-neutral carbon tax. If a carbon tax is not revenue neutral, it's a tax grab. If the revenues don't go back to the people, it's a tax grab. If the tax is not visible, it will not do the job that's intended: to curb the use of emission -laden products. If lower-income people don't get more of the refund, it will be unfair.

If we must have a carbon tax, Brown's approach is a far more transparent and equitable alternative.

Don Mustill, **Niagara**-on-the-Lake

Back to Top

NP

Terence Corcoran: Another 'green' power boondoggle sinks taxpayers and consumers in the red

Financial Post - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Terence Corcoran
Reach: 607500

From Bonavista to Vancouver Island, from the Arctic Circle to the Great Lake waters, this land really belongs to **electric**-**power** monopolies and politicians who routinely bulldoze property rights, **ratepayers**, taxpayers and the regulators that have become puppets of governing political string-pullers.

They promised green and clean. What they deliver to Canadians instead is expensive and in the red. From **coast** to **coast**, provincial governments continue to plow ahead with **power**-generating mega-projects and green-**power** schemes whose only certain output is massive debts and soaring costs to deliver **electricity** that may never be needed.

Out Bonavista way, Newfoundlanders are saddled with Muskrat Falls (business.financialpost.com) , a giant dam project under construction in Labrador. Nalcor **Energy**, the provincial **power** monopoly in cahoots with provincial and federal politicians, started with a cost estimate of $7.4 billion to ship **electricity** from Labrador to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The latest estimated cost is $12.7 billion.

The original rationale for the project: Green and clean **electric** **power**. There is no way the project can return its costs, which means **electricity** consumers will be paying higher than market prices for **electricity** and/or taxpayers will be picking up most of the debt. DBRS recently gave $8 billion of Muskrat Falls' debt a triple-A rating, but only because the bonds carry a "flow-through" rating from the federal government. As a result, that debt carries "an irrevocable, unconditional, absolute and continuing obligation" of the government of Canada. Translation: Investors are rock-solid and federal taxpayers are screwed (business.financialpost.com) .

Around the Great Lakes, **Ontario**'s **electricity** regime is a giant house of fiscal smoke and dirty mirrors to fund the green and clean **power** the province has mandated, including billion-dollar **wind** and **solar** projects that produce expensive **electricity** the province does not need.

The result is a fiscal scam known as the **Fair** **Hydro** **Plan**, in which **ratepayers** see a fake 25-per-cent reduction in **electricity** **rates**. To pay for the **rate** cut, the province will have to either increase its debt or raise taxes, or both. A report Monday from the province's Fiscal Accountability Office said **Ontario** will run up $14.1 billion in debt over the next five years to finance below-cost prices for clean and green **energy**.

Out Vancouver way, the same smoke and mirror structures are under construction around BC **Hydro**.

On Monday, B.C. Premier John Horgan announced that his New Democratic government will continue to back BC **Hydro**'s Site (business.financialpost.com) C **hydro**-generating project, an $11-billion dam expansion along the Peace **River**, 1,200 kilometres **north** of Vancouver. At that distance, 14 per cent of the generated **power** is lost in **transmission**.

Stepping over the bodies of his Green Party coalition partners who wanted the project stopped - as Horgan had suggested he might do during last June's election -the premier produced a series of partial numbers and a lot of leftist cant. He claimed the decision to proceed with the project and avoid the costs of stopping the project in mid-course will save his government's $10-a-day daycare program and allow it to continue to fund hospitals and schools.

Using estimates from the provincial **regulator**'s **review** of the project, Horgan said that stopping Site C would cost the province $4 billion, including $2.1 billion already spent and another $1.8 billion to remediate the site. If the province had to absorb that loss, other programs would have to be cut. Or **electricity** **rates** would have to increase 12 per cent for the next decade if all $4 billion of the costs were loaded onto BC **Hydro**'s already substantial debt.

Horgan did not clearly spell out how much it will cost B.C. **ratepayers** to pay for Site C **electricity**. Nor could he guarantee the cost of the project, already heading for a 30-per-cent overrun, will avoid rising another 20 per cent to $12.5 billion as the province's **utilities** **regulator** has warned it could.

Most commentators gave Horgan a pat on the back for the decision, praising him for being pragmatic in the face of a fractious political situation. Blaming the Site C project on the previous Liberal government is appropriate. But Horgan's strategy is to pile aboard the governance regime that mars all **electricity** systems across Canada.

Washing over Horgan's decision as politically necessary and expedient ignores the fiscal risks building around BC **Hydro**. Recent Moody's credit reviews of the province and BC **Hydro** suggest a company that's building up a shaky balance sheet filled with nooks and crannies of debt that **ratepayers** will have to fund.

Taxpayers are already paying. In January, Moody's noted that BC **Hydro** will soon no longer be paying a dividend to the province, which means a loss of almost $300 million in annual revenue. The company is also sitting on $5.5 billion in deferred **rate** increases that will eventually have to be covered by **ratepayers**. "BC **Hydro** posts some metrics that are among the weakest of **Canadian** provincial **utilities**," said Moody's.

The impact of Site C means more debt to be covered by **rate** increases. "Should BC **Hydro**'s financial position deteriorate, the possibility that it would require some support from the province will increase. We will continue to monitor BC **Hydro**'s financial strength over the coming years through the construction and initial operations of Site C."

This is what happens when provincial politicians maintain giant **electric**-**utility** monopolies - BC **Hydro**, **Ontario**'s **hydro** companies and Nalcor in Newfoundland - that continue to bamboozle voters and **ratepayers**.

The long-term outcome of these still-growing provincial **power** regimes is that the green objectives of reducing carbon and moving to clean **hydro** **power** will never be met. If carbon taxes are imposed to move consumers off fossil **fuels**, then consumers will be looking at overpriced and monopolistic **electricity**. The cost of charging e-cars in the future is set to soar, from **coast** to **coast**, where **power** monopolies reign.

Back to Top

Algoma emissions 'aggressively'cut

Sault Ste. Marie This Week - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Sara Mccleary
Page: A1 / Front

Algoma held an open house last week to show off its pollution abatement program.

Community Environmental Open House focused on cokemaking emissions, which have dramatically decreased since the federal government put new limits and testing methods in place in July 2015.

"Coke is an essential ingredient in the manufacture of molten iron, and by extension, steel," Brenda Stenta, **Algoma**'s manager of communications and branding, told Sault This Week.

"Coke is produced by baking coal in an oven in the absence of oxygen. As with any combustion source, emissions are unavoidable. The only way to totally eliminate emissions from an oven is not to operate it."

Those emissions come in the form of particulate matter and BaP, or benzo a pyrene.

Despite the inability to get emissions right to zero, "The team at **Algoma** has been aggressively reducing emissions from the cokemaking operations," Stenta said. "In accordance with the ministry standard, performance of each coke battery is tracked daily."

The team measures key indicators, including pushing emissions, charging emissions, lid leaks, offtake leaks, and door leaks.

Algoma operates three coke ovens, or batteries - numbers seven, eight, and nine. All three batteries are performing below current limits and in many cases are at or below 2020 goals, she said.

Data presented at the open house rec ord **Algoma**'s charging emissions ranging from one to 11 points below the limit since February 2016, while its lid emissions have been consistently below the limits since August 2016 and are performing below the 2020 limits.

Similarly, both the number seven and number nine batteries have performed well below current offtake emissions limits since **Algoma** began tracking the data in August 2015, and are below 2020 levels. The number eight battery is below current levels and on track to achieve the 2020 limit ahead of schedule.

Door emissions had run mostly at or above ministry limits until this fall, and now are on track to achieve the 2020 limits on time.

Fred Post, **Algoma**'s manager of environmental control, explained to community members much of the reason for the success of the company's efforts is due to new technologies, including simply using water to ensure doors are properly sealed and to capture particulate. **Algoma** is nearly finished installing the new technologies on all three ovens.

Also addressed at the Open House was **Algoma**'s development of a proposal for a stormwater treatment facility, soon to be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and **Climate** Change for approval.

"**Algoma** is proposing the installation of a stormwater treatment facility for surface water run off that drains into a ditch located at the northeastern portion of **Algoma**'s Material Storage and Reprocessing Site," said Stenta. "The facility would first treat the surface water for pH, total dissolved solids, and total iron."

Material provided at the open house indicates **Algoma** has conducted several water quality studies at the site since 2014 that have shown the water requires treatment.

"The proposed treatment facility will consist of two treatment ponds to provide flocculation and settling, followed by pH adjustment," says the material.

Finally, the open house briefly addressed **Algoma**'s efforts to reduce greenhouse **gas** (GHG) emissions.

"Approximately 70 per cent of the GHG emissions in the integrated steelmaking process are fixed, meaning the very manufacture of steel requires essential chemical reactions for which there are no alternative commercially-viable technologies available today," said Stenta.

"Nevertheless, the team at Algoma is focused on the other 30 per cent of the process where there is opportunity for reduction."

The open house information shows Algoma spends approximately $20 million to rebuild one blast furnace stove, which will reduce GHG emissions by 40,000 tonnes per year.

Stenta did not respond to inquiries concerning Algoma's current total GHG emissions, but did point to some of the ideas Algoma is considering to further reduce its carbon footprint, "including 71 MW of sustainable power alternatives."

The ideas include 50 MW from a solar farm, 8 MW from a low pressure steam turbine, which would convert steam generated from steelmaking into electricity, and 13 MW from a top gas recovery turbine at the top of the number seven blast furnace.

"Combined, these projects would generate about 50 per cent of Algoma's average power requirement," said Stenta.

The open house also pointed community members to Algoma's Community Liaison Committee, which was formed "to provide a forum for the communication of relevant environmental information to the public, facilitating communication as necessary between the community and the company with respect to the environment."

Saultites with concerns regarding environmental impacts of the operations of the facility are invited to contact the committee to have their issues addressed.

Back to Top

Pickering nuclear exercise takes place day auditor general slams emergency planning

Pickering News Advertiser - Mon Dec 11 2017
Tone: Negative
Ad Value: $1,267
Reach: 51400 **Page:** 1

PICKERING - The emergency exercise conducted at the Pickering nuclear generating station last week took place the same day the Ontario auditor general's report found the province is not prepared for a large-scale emergency.

The report on emergency management in Ontario notes Ontario has the highest nuclear capacity of a state or province in North America. The auditor points out several concerns, including the province's emergency response plan hasn't been updated since 2008 and 2009; and traffic control plans are still in draft form. It also noted emergency tests mainly concentrate on events occurring inside the nuclear power facility, which is the responsibility of nuclear companies, and they usually do not extensively test areas outside the nuclear power facility, which is the province's responsibility.

"The auditor's report shows how the government has not only failed to deliver on its obligations to maintain existing nuclear emergency response plans, but learn from the Fukushima disaster," said Shawn-Patrick Stensil, a senior energy analyst with Greenpeace Canada. "This is either complacency or lack of capacity. Both are unacceptable and dangerous."

Marie France Lalonde, minister of community safety and correctional services, made a statement following the release of the report. She noted the province is updating Ontario's emergency management system. The internal review was completed in August and the findings are publicly available.

"We are pleased to see that the findings from the auditor general's report are consistent with our **review**, and we have already begun taking immediate steps to address her recommendations," she said.

The province recently announced **Ontario**'s Emergency Management Action **Plan**, which outlines a number of key initiatives. Initial plans include: recruiting a chief of emergency management to help ensure effective oversight and governance of emergency management across **Ontario**; releasing an updated Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response **Plan** by the end of 2017; and supporting municipalities in accessing critical supplies and resources in an emergency.

Ontario Power Generation (**OPG**) and 30-plus agencies embarked on a large-scale emergency exercise at the Pickering nuclear plant on Dec. 6 and Dec. 7. The event tested each organization's emergency response plans.

"We really do these exercises to make sure our plans and practices are ready and that we can work co-operatively with our partners, the City of Pickering the City of **Toronto**, Durham Region and the province," said **OPG** spokesperson Neal Kelly.

He said **OPG** practices emergency responses on a regular basis.

"The more you practice, the better you'll be able to respond in the highly unlikely event of an emergency," he said.

On the first day of the exercise, Durham Nuclear Awareness (DNA) and **Ontario** Clean Air Alliance (OCAA) took their concerns around why the Pickering plant should close by handing out pamphlets at the Pickering **Public** Library. The Raging Grannies, an activist organization made up of women who sing songs at protests, later joined DNA, OCAA and residents at the beach, next to the plant, to push for the closure of the plant.

"It's time for the plant to go," said Pickering resident David Sim. "It's a stain on our community and a danger to the region. There are cheaper, safer alternatives to the Pickering plant. It's time we move in that direction."

Resident Mike Borie feels a true test of any emergency system is not one that is planned and known ahead of time.

"There should not be a scheduled day or time for the actual test to start," he said.

Angela Bischoff, OCAA outreach director, said the simple solution is to close the Pickering plant, which is currently applying to have its license extended beyond the planned closure date of August 2018.

"It's beyond its design life, it's served its purpose and now it's a dangerous, large station in the middle of a large urban population." she said. "Accidents happen. And when nuclear accidents happen, they're catastrophic. Why would we risk a catastrophic accident in the middle of a huge urban population when we have lower cost, cleaner alternatives available?"

Back to Top

No safety incidents since Darlington refurb workers sent home

Clarington This Week - Wed Dec 13 2017
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $57
Reach: 51830 **Page:** 1

CLARINGTON - The number of low-level safety issues at the **Ontario Power Generation** Darlington Refurbishment project has been reduced since a concerning trend prompted a safety stand down that sent workers home in late November.

"The entire team has reaffirmed their commitment to safety and there have been no safety incidents since the stand-down, which is our baseline expectation. Safety is our core value," said Cliff Eubanks, project director for the joint venture overseeing the refurbishment work, SNC Lavalin and Aecon.

The stand-down was a way of trying to address unsafe work trends before any potential workplace injuries could occur, explained Neal Kelly, an **Ontario Power Generation** (**OPG**) spokesperson.

He gave an example of a low-level event could be workers working at a height with tools or material that is not properly secured. Any supervisor or co-worker who spotted the potential hazard would report it. If several similar safety reports came in, the contractors managing the refurbishment work may decide to call a safety stand down to deal with the worrying trend.

"These are low-level events, but if they continue, you may have a more significant injury," said Kelly. "It's to make sure people **review** their safety procedure. To make sure they do everything they could possibly do to remain safe."

The safety stand down was a decision of the joint venture management overseeing the refurbishment work, which **OPG** fully supported, said Kelly.

Refurbishment workers were sent home on the afternoon of Thursday, Nov. 30. Supervisors returned to work on Friday, Dec. 1 to **review** their safety plans and workers were back on the job Saturday, Dec. 2 at 7:30 a.m.

Kelly said the time lost during the stand-down will actually help keep the refurbishment project on-time and on-budget in the long run if it helps prevent a workplace injury.

"The safety stand-down will renew everybody's focus around safety and make sure this project remains on-time and on-budget," said Kelly, who added the stand-down is a common industry practice. "Everybody is back to work. They're refocussed."

Kelly stressed there have been no lost-time injuries on the Darlington Refurbishment project.

Back to Top

KincardineNews

Twolan passes Bruce County warden torch to Arran-Elderslie mayor Eagleson

Kincardine News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Don Crosby
Page: A9

Arran-Elderslie Mayor Paul Eagleson was acclaimed warden of Bruce County Dec. 7 during the 2018 inaugural council session.

Eagleson, who was warden 1995, said it was a honour not only to sit at the head of county council but to be acclaimed by members of council.

Reflecting on his previous term of warden, he noted that while a lot has changed in the past 22 years "the basic responsibilities of advocating for Bruce County the place and Bruce County the organization are still the same."

In his inaugural address Eagleson noted that many of the county priorities for 2018 are set out in next year's spending estimates. His job, he said, will be to see them through to completion.

They include dealing with the McCurdy Bridge on the boundary of Arran-Elderslie and Brockton and the Mill Creek Bridge in Port Elgin, advancing the SWIFT broadband project and initiating a new paramedic station in Saugeen Shores.

In addition to county-wide initiatives contained in the annual business **plan**, Eagleson said he plans to continue to move a **natural gas** extension project forward for southern Bruce County.

The project is awaiting a decision by the **Ontario Energy Board** as to which supplier will get the **contract** to bring **natural gas** to Arran-Elderslie, **Huron**-Kinloss and Kincardine.

Eagleson is the 133rd person to hold the position of warden for Bruce County since the county was created in 1867.

Eagleson takes over from outgoing warden **Huron**-Kinloss mayor Mitch Twolan, who held the warden's position for the past three years.

He predicts that the county's economic development partnership with Bruce **Power**, which has seen dozens of companies move to the area, will continue to be at the forefront of the county's growth.

"The most important thing, in my mind, that we can do is try to find economic development so people in our communities can go to work every day and have the quality of life to support their families," said Twolan. "That's the number one piece of advice that I give to Warden Eagleson."

Eagleson operates a funeral home in Tara and a furniture store in Saugeen Shores.

Back to Top

Bruce Power fined $110,000 for workplace injury

KincardineNews

Kincardine News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: Frances Learment
Page: A8

Bruce **Power** Inc. was fined $110,000 for a preventable workplace accident that burned a worker 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 Dec. 6, 2017 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 to 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 Dec. 7 telephone interview how the safety information did not get to the workers, James Scongack, Bruce Power's Vice President of Corporate Affairs & Environment would not comment on two charges withdrawn by the Crown, saying they are not relevent. At press time, the Crown had not responded to a request for comment.

Scongack would not comment on how the safety information did not get to the workers.

"It would have been beneficial in this case, but corrective actions have been put in place to ensure it doesn't repeat again " Scongack said.

In a Dec. 6 email, Bruce Power spokesperson John Peevers said "despite risk assessments, a pre-job briefing and safety meeting, a risk in progress was not significantly identified to Bruce Power and the company did not inform workers."

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.

Peevers said immediately following the incident, 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.

Back to Top

Pipeline bottlenecks push Canadian oil price to deepest discount in 4 years

CBC News - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral

The price gap between the price of Canada's oil benchmark versus its U.S. equivalent, West Texas Intermediate, has widened to its biggest difference in almost four years, with Canadian crude now selling at a $25 discount.

Back to Top

Federal plan aims to reduce carbon content in fossil fuels

The Globe and Mail - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value: $11,843
Reach: 309154 **Page:** B3

The federal government is moving to implement regulations to require all providers of fossilfuel energy to reduce the carbon content of their fuels as part of its effort to meet Canada's targets for greenhouse gas reduction.

Environment and Climate Change Canada on Wednesday released a broad framework under which it will set "Clean Fuel Standard" regulations for energy used in transportation, buildings and industry. After consultations with industry and other stakeholders, the government will introduce draft fuels regulations next year, with the coming-intoforce date to be determined.

Under the plan, energy companies that provide oil-based or natural-gas fuels will have to find ways to reduce their overall carbon footprint. They can, for example, increase the efficiency of their energy supply chains and industrial processes; increase the use of ethanol or renewable natural gas; or invest in electric-vehicle charging stations.

The rules will be "technologyneutral, meaning that producers, importers and distributors will have the flexibility to meet the targets in many different ways, with actions or investments that make sense for them," Environment Canada said in a background document released on Wednesday.

Ottawa expects the regulations will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 30 million tonnes a year by 2030, the equivalent of taking seven million cars off the road. The clean fuel standard is a major part of the government's effort to reduce GHGs by 30 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030, as Canada pledged to do under the United Nations climate-change agreement signed in Paris two years ago.

"Without the standard, it would be difficult for Canada to meet its Paris climate commitment, and Canadian fuels would remain more polluting than necessary," Environment Canada said.

Environment Minister Catherine McKenna was in Paris on Wednesday for the One Planet summit organized by French President Emmanuel Macron to mark the second anniversary of the UN deal. She has reiterated Ottawa's desire to play a leadership role in the international effort to reduce carbon emissions, despite concerns among some in the business community that Canada is piling added costs on businesses even as the U.S. government is slashing regulations and taxes under President Donald Trump.

The federal government is also working on a "zero emissions vehicle" strategy, which is expected to be released in the new year and will support the use of electric vehicles and other low-emission options such as hydrogen vehicles and naturalgas-powered trucks. The fuels are also covered by federal and provincial carbon pricing plans.

The Ontario government recently announced it will increase its ethanol content requirement for gasoline marketers, boosting it to 10 per cent from 5 per cent by 2020. The ethanol industry wants the federal government to match Ontario's increased ethanol mandate, but Ottawa says it will maintain the mandate "in the short term" and replace it with an increasingly stringent clean fuel regulations over the longer term.

"Maintaining and growing mandates as a complement to pricing carbon ensures continued local investment and innovation while creating jobs," said Andrea Kent, spokeswoman for Greenfield Global, one of the country's largest corn-based ethanol producers.

Back to Top

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Federal clean fuel standard to require emissions cuts across the board

News · National Post · Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Maura Forrest
Reach: 607500

OTTAWA - The federal government has released its plan for a clean fuel standard, which it calls "the single largest emission-reduction policy in Canada's climate and clean-growth plan."

The new standard will require carbon-intensity reductions in **fuels** used across the board, including in the **transportation**, building and industrial sectors. It aims to cut greenhouse **gas** emissions by 30 million tonnes annually by 2030, equivalent to taking seven million cars off the road.

"Using cleaner **fuels** in our buildings, vehicles, and industrial operations is one of the biggest steps we can take to reduce carbon pollution and make our economy cleaner and more competitive," Environment Minister Catherine McKenna said in a statement on Wednesday.

According to a government release, "Without the standard, it would be difficult for Canada to meet its Paris **climate** commitment, and **Canadian fuels** would remain more polluting than necessary."

Environment Minister Catherine McKenna

Draft regulations for the clean fuel standard are expected in late 2018, with final regulations to be in place by mid-2019. But the government won't say when the **rules** will come into force, which suggests it may not happen before the next federal election, expected in 2019.

The framework also doesn't say how deep the emissions intensity cuts will be, though the requirements will become more stringent over time, and will differ for solid, liquid and **gaseous fuels**. That's partly to ensure there will be emissions cuts in the **transportation** sector, according to the framework, since 80 per of liquid **fuels** are used in **transportation**. Emissions credits can be traded within each fuel type.

Clean **energy** groups welcomed the **plan**'s release Wednesday. "The design framework appears to be a good start," said Ian Thomson, president of Advanced Biofuels Canada, in an email. "We can work with it."

Thomson said he'd previously been concerned there wouldn't be a separate standard for **transportation fuels**, which he believed "would leave petroleum **fuels** largely unchanged."

But industry groups seem less than thrilled. In a statement, the **Canadian Fuels** Association said it's disappointed there will be different requirements for different fuel types, "since it may impede the market from achieving the lowest cost of compliance." In an email, CFA western division vice-president Brian Ahearn said that without partitioning, producers and importers could have cut emissions intensity through whichever sector was cheapest, and could have traded credits between sectors. Under the current framework, that largely won't be allowed.

The association is also concerned that the regulations will apply to "self-produced and used" **fuels**, typically fuel **gas** or petroleum coke created during the refining process. "(These) are fixed products produced in the refining process, where we do not have a fuel switch option, and we would have to purchase credits for compliance," Ahearn said.

Ottawa looking at 15 per cent **ethanol** blend in **gasoline** (nationalpost.com)

Federal clean fuel standard would likely boost jobs and economy, think tank says (nationalpost.com)

Ottawa looking into low-carbon **fuels** ahead of new clean fuel standards (nationalpost.com)

The standard will eventually replace Canada's existing renewable fuel regulation, which currently requires five per cent renewable content in **gasoline** (generally supplied by **ethanol**) and two per cent in diesel. According to Renewable Industries Canada (RICanada), that regulation has cut greenhouse gas emissions by 4.2 million tonnes annually since 2010.

Unlike the renewable fuel regulation, the clean fuel standard is meant to be flexible, allowing producers and importers to reduce carbon intensity through the lifecycle of the fuel however they like, including by adding renewable fuel to their product or investing in low-carbon technology like electric vehicles.

Still, W. Scott Thurlow, former president of the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association - now RICanada - said that for the time being, producers will still have to use ethanol and biodiesel to meet the new requirements. "If they can prove reductions in a different way, they can do it," he said in an email. "Until they achieve that new technology, they will use ethanol and biodiesel in increasing amounts to achieve the goal of GHG reductions."

Jeremy Moorhouse, a senior analyst with Clean Energy Canada, said the new standard will drive investment and create new jobs in the clean fuel industry. "There's a real link to innovation and job creation in that sector across Canada," he said.

Clean Energy Canada has estimated the standard could increase gasoline prices by five cents a litre.

The clean fuel standard will supplement carbon prices, which most provinces have already agreed to implement. The federal government is also expected to release a "zero-emissions vehicle" strategy next year, to promote electric, hybrid and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

. Email: mforrest@postmedia.com(mailto:mforrest@postmedia.com) Twitter: MauraForrest(//twitter.com/mauraforrest")

Back to Top

Ribbon cut for battery storage facility; Festival Hydro hosts grand-opening ceremony for Canada's largest battery storage facility

Stratford Beacon-Herald - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Galen Simmons

Ad Value: $577
Reach: 10143 **Page:** A3

It's not up and running yet, but by the time everyone gets back from holidays, the four lithium ion battery cell arrays will be ready to take the pressure off Stratford's power grid in the city's industrial south end.

During a grand opening ceremony Wednesday at the battery storage facility in the Wright Business Park - next to the $15.8-million transformer station built by Festival Hydro in 2013 - representatives from Festival Hydro, its partners and the city were on hand to complete the official ribbon cutting and mark the beginning of a new age of power storage in Stratford.

"They're going through final commissioning and we're hoping to have this facility connected to the grid in the month of December," Festival Hydro CEO Ysni Semsedini said after the ribbon cutting. "... As you can see, there are over 300 racks with seven batteries on each, adding up to the 8.8-megawatt, 40.8-megawatt-hour installation."

Through a partnership with Powin Energy, the facility's principal investor, Hecate Energy, Saturn Power and Ellis Don Construction, Festival Hydro's battery storage project - Canada's largest - is part of the Ontario Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO) long-term energy plan to provide key supports, like voltage control and demand reduction during peak hours, through new **energy** storage technologies.

"Over the next couple of weeks, we'll be doing final commissioning to get this site ready to be grid integrated, and after that we'll flip it on and we'll be working with the **IESO** to figure out the running conditions they want to see within the system - some of it will be for voltage support or frequency stability, or they may do it for lower peak," Semsedini said.

"We'll use this site in a whole bunch of different variations. That was the whole purpose of the **IESO** issuing the **contract**, was to be able to see how we can use this battery storage within the overall system. This test facility is ... one of the first large-scale battery storage projects to go live in **Ontario**."

Prior to the ribbon cutting, Stratford Mayor Dan Mathieson touted Powin **Energy**'s $25 million investment into the city's battery storage facility as yet another example of how Stratford is at the forefront of technological advancement.

"Whether it's autonomous vehicles, vehicle manufacturing with this industrial park, the RBC's data **centre** just a short kilometre away ... or it's this very battery storage facility at 8.8 megawatts of **power**, it says that Stratford is on the right trajectory ... We pride ourselves on being a city of the future, a city of innovation, and a city that knows that things are changing in communities, and that we need to be on the forefront," Mathieson said.

"And that's what makes the difference between this city of 32,000 and so many other communities across this province and this nation. I think the future is very bright for this community."

Back to Top

Province ignores high cost of gas, energy , car insurance

The Sudbury Star

Sudbury Star - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Positive
Byline: John Oattes

Ad Value: $334
Reach: 14934 **Page:** A10

Recently, a family member came up from **Ottawa** to help us get ready for winter.

He was thunderstruck by the outrageous price of **gasoline** here in the city and wondered why there were no complaints about it.

Oh, I said, there are lots of complaints, but our current Liberal government, as usual, doesn't seem to be listening.

Then I told him that our current **minister of Energy** was the MP for the **Sudbury** riding (and now is **Sudbury**'s MPP) and has lots to say about the marvelous job his party is doing and talks without end about their great **plan** to cut the **hydro** costs here by 25 per cent, but says almost nothing about how this is being managed. That being, in my opinion, is handing the resulting costs off to our taxpayers, including the young, in the future.

Never a mention about the outlandish price of our fuel here, though. Funny that.

By the way, not much to say about our outlandish costs for car insurance, as well. I can't understand why I watch question period in both Queen's Park and the House of Commons in **Ottawa**. Must be in the blood, I guess.

Now, how about that nice fluffy snow we got the other night? **Gas** for my snow blower now, as well.

Back to Top

Your letters: Carbon tax is better than cap and trade

thestar.com - Thu Dec 14 2017
Tone: Negative **Reach:** 999000

Changing a regime for change's sake, Cohn, Dec. 12

Martin Regg Cohn dismisses Conservative Leader Patrick Brown's carbon **plan** as "change for the sake of change." In fact, much like the Liberal government's green-**energy** fiasco, we should be cutting our losses before more damage is done.

Before the Liberal **cap and trade** **plan** becomes yet another expensive boondoggle, we would be wise to objectively **review** what's gone on in Europe. The aptly named European Trading Scheme (ETS) has been active for 12 years and is now undergoing serious reform - an acknowledgement of its failure to have any meaningful effect on reducing CO2 emissions. It remains to be seen if the reforms will have the desired impact.

Cap and trade is so complex that it's virtually impossible to grasp the complete picture and, not surprisingly, it's easy to get it wrong. If the cap is not high enough, it becomes a bureaucratic process that accomplishes nothing. If too many carbon credits are on the market, the price of these allowances plummets and companies lose the incentive to reduce emissions. This was one of the primary factors in the failure of the ETS.

The worst element of **cap and trade** might be the direction of all revenues into so-called "green" projects. These are projects that should be funded through responsible prioritization of tax revenues - but instead, they'll be used to buy votes with more government programs - creating a sleight-of-hand fiscal imbalance. The complexity of the **Cap and Trade** market - as already demonstrated in Europe - is ripe for manipulation, if not outright corruption.

Brown proposes a revenue-neutral carbon tax. If the revenues don't go back to the people, it's a tax grab. If the tax is not visible, it will not do the job that's intended: to curb the use of emission-laden products. If lower-income people don't get more of the refund, it will be unfair. If we must have a carbon tax, Brown's approach is a far more transparent and equitable alternative.

Don Mustill, **Niagara**-on-the-Lake

Back to Top