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**“Ontario – a new era in electricity conservation”
Summary on Education and its benefits from the Annual Report 2006**

*Submitted by Maureen Mulligan to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
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Brief Summary of Program Results

The Public Utility Commission noted the existence of the Ontario Conservation Program when soliciting comments on energy efficiency and conservation programs suitable for Pennsylvania. What follows is a short summary of the highlights of their program and their approach to education. These activities are for the period from October 1, 2005 until August 31, 2006.

- Ontario electricity consumers have reduced peak demand by about 950MW since 2004 including 328 MW of “naturally occurring conservation.”
- The Conservation Bureau, the newly created bureau responsible to meet the program goals, initially launched ten programs in 2006 which included demand response; changes to building code standards; phase out of large refrigeration, air conditioners and chillers due to Ozone Depleting Substances regulation; training HVAC installers to install energy efficient appliances; EDC’s conservation programs through the use of rebates and incentives for reducing demand during peak periods; significant investments by EDCS and energy management firms in conservation measures, appliance and lighting replacement; market transformation actions such as increasing appliance standards, and education designed to change behavior.
- The “tools” used to develop programs were comprehensive in nature and broadly represented approaches that included regulatory, financial, technological and marketing with clearly delineated categories under each of these headings.

It should be noted that the first year of the program was not as successful as they had hoped so they stepped up efforts in 2006, many of which are still underway. In 2006, along with increasing overall efforts, they are systematically looking at government policies and legislation that may be barriers to implementing more aggressive electricity conservation measures. Their goal is to meet or exceed 6,300 MW of peak electricity saving by 2025 and to create “a culture of conservation” in Ontario with interim goals of 1,350 MW reduction in peak demand by 2007 and another 1,350 MW by 2010. One responsibility of the Ontario Power Authority is to develop a long term Integrated Power System Plan for Ontario with targets for conservation and renewable energy. This twenty year plan is being developed in concert with the program goals and is expected to be completed in January 2007.

Sample Ontario Education Programs

- Everyone has a role to play to achieve a culture of conservation in Ontario – education is broad-based and inclusive.
- Local distribution companies did not have a coordinated approach initially until the Ontario Power Authority worked to change that approach.
- Municipal programs voluntarily tried different approaches to conservation and branded their campaigns with attention-getting names.
- The Conservation Bureau researched the current state of the conservation market and identified customer needs and best practices in program design and implementation. This included polling and focus groups to determine residential awareness. Follow up polling was done. Information was used to target programs and conservation awareness activities.
- The development of a hospital on-line template of standardized energy conservation plans for their facilities was designed. This helps educate the hospital administrators and energy managers as to successful conservation, energy efficiency measures.
- New building codes and existing building retrofits projects engaged the trade associations to participate in energy audits and energy reduction plans to get certification.
- Financial incentives that provide a benefit to the consumer help motivate people to become educated consumers.
- Non-government organizations were used to implement programs in the community including the Canadian Green Building Council, Clean Air Foundation, Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance etc. These groups were recognized for “keeping conservation alive” in the absence of non-government initiatives.
- Ontario’s government is holding itself to a higher standard of energy reduction and will be able to educate consumers on how they accomplished their goals.
- The Conservation Fund provides financial assistance for sector specific pilot programs that can be easily replicated. Second refrigerator and inefficient models were replaced as part of a pilot project. Results are being evaluated before deployed Province-wide. Different marketing approaches were used in each of the six test communities and will be evaluated to their effectiveness.
- Every household received a booklet on energy saving tips and money-saving coupons. More than 300,000 coupons representing 250,000 households redeemed coupons for compact fluorescent lights, programmable thermostats and ceiling fans.
- First Nations will receive energy audits and education in all 100 homes in the Georgina Island Project.
- Greening of sacred spaces focuses on reducing electricity consumption and promoting more energy efficient lifestyles to the religious community members.

- “Closing Doors” program encourages stores and restaurants to keep their doors and windows closed while operating A/C. They display poster signs at their businesses to increase awareness.
- Three main messages were communicated to all consumers: 1. Increase home and office temperatures by two degrees in the warm weather. 2. Wait until after 8PM to use electrical appliances where possible. 3. Choose to use electricity efficiently.
- Certificates of Recognition were issued to acknowledge leadership roles in energy reduction.
- The Chief of Energy Conservation engaged in over a 100 educational campaigns and activities in about a ten month time frame.
- Media articles and regular columns in newspapers were widely used.
- A forum was held for non-government participants to get feedback on what regulatory barriers exist in the marketplace and they developed plans to address these barriers.

Funding

- Transitional funding was approved during the start-up phase of the program and received approval for the EDCs to spend up to \$161 million until September 2007. As of June 2006, they had spent only \$60 million of the approved budgets due to slow start up. In July 2006, the Ontario Power Authority approved funding of \$400 million over three years to the local distribution companies. A stakeholder process was used to develop policies and oversee the funding. Blue Summit and Regulatory Assistance Project did a comprehensive fifty-nine page report on funding that can be found at www.camput.org

Summary Statement

In conclusion, Ontario did not do everything right and they would agree with that statement. For example, they realize they don't have a good methodology developed to track results in some cases. They are working on that.

Having the utility companies shoulder the responsibility for education may not be the best approach. I suggest Ontario has many of the components that make up a good education approach and could serve, along with other practices as a good starting point for the Commission.