

Power costs no bolt from blue

Though the power-rate increases proposed over the next five years by Ontario Hydro are breathtaking, the figures shouldn't have startled politicians or consumers.

There has been ample warning that the era of cheap energy is over. In the case of Ontario Hydro, provincial approval last summer of its \$16.7 billion expansion program to double electrical generating capacity by 1982 foreshadowed sharp increases in power costs.

Last January, for example, Hydro forecast consumer-rate increases of at least 10 per cent annually for each of the next three years, then indicated a month ago that even those increases would be inadequate to its needs. Revised figures suggested annual rate increases amounting to between 50 and 75 per cent over the next five years in the cost of wholesale power rates to municipal utilities, which handle distribution in urban areas. Annual increases would range from 7.2 to 15.6 per cent, assuming that Hydro stuck to its present policy of borrowing 80 per cent of its capital funds and raising 20 per cent from power users.

Reports of the large power-rate increases sought by Hydro went almost unnoticed in January and April. But when Hydro issued a press release last week confirming its intentions to seek Ontario Energy Board approval of annual increases averaging 15 per cent, the news had an electrifying impact. Even the government sounded surprised, with Energy Minister Darcy McKeough conceding that the proposed rate increases are "staggering"

and pregnant with economic and social implications — though if anyone should have anticipated the scale of the increases it was the energy minister.

Still, the figures are staggering and — as was noted editorially when Hydro indicated in January the magnitude of the rate increases it thought necessary — they attest to the wisdom of requiring Hydro to justify in public energy-board hearings all rate increases after Jan. 1, 1975. Until the legislation was changed last year, Hydro raised rates arbitrarily.

The power costs projected in the Hydro rate schedule seem inconsistent with the country's rich stock of energy resources. Coal is still used to fuel a large part of Hydro's generating capacity but it's far cheaper — almost \$10-a-ton — for Ontario to import United States' coal than it is to rely on coal from western Canada. Hydro recently executed a long-term billion-dollar contract for Pennsylvania coal.

Ontario also faces the prospect of paying significantly more than neighboring states for natural gas as a result of steep increases in Alberta's prices. Both situations dramatize the need for a national policy that would assure Canadian industries, utilities and consumers at least some edge in the cost of domestic resources.

Even if power-rate increases can be reduced from the lofty figures proposed by Hydro, the provincial government — recognizing the inevitability of more expensive energy — should be looking at ways to moderate the impact of higher power costs on those without money to spare.

May 8, 1974

The first commercially practical zippers are believed to have been applied to rubber galoshes in 1923.

At Lakeside, Ontario the name of Crystal Lake has been change to Lake Sunova it is announced by the Canadian Board of Geographical Names at Ottawa.

1949

Several members of the Lakeside Women's Institute attended the Summary Day for the "More Ideas for Sewing With Knits" short course presented in the Legion Hall Woodstock on April 25. Leaders of the Lakeside Class were Mrs. Robert Holden and Mrs. James

Have you heard of Murphy's Law? That's when everything that should not happen to a dog happens to you. I guess all have had that happen one time or another, so if it does, just remember this:

If times are hard and you feel blue
Think of others worrying too.
Just because your trials are many
Don't think the rest of us haven't any
If we could look into every heart
We'd find that each one has its part
And those who travel fortune's road
Sometimes carry the biggest load . . .

Zegers who set up the display of garments made by the group. Models for the Fashion Show presentations were Mrs. James Zegers, Mrs. Jared Vining.

This short course was sponsored by the Home Economist Branch of the Department of Agriculture and Food.

S. S. Awards Presented

Lakeside United Church Sunday School Anniversary was Sunday April 28. Special music was by the Sunday School choir. The special speaker was Rev. Edgar Gill B.A.

Attendance awards for 48 Sunday attendance were presented to 25 pupils. The pupils receiving awards were: - Wendy Barrows, Kevin Craig, Brenda Holden, Tammy Pickering, Laurie Pickering, Jeff Pickering, Michael Pickering, Wanda Smith, Robert Kittmer, Mary Slater, Janet Slater, Marie Holden, Sandra Holden, Steven Smith, Cheryl Whittaker, Kenneth Whittaker, Mark Wollny, Cathy Wollny, Mart Kittmer, Jamie Kittmer, Murray Beacham, Nancy Kittmer, Cindy Kittmer, David Kittmer, Bill Kittmer.