

Let there be dark

A recent survey indicates nearly three-quarters of Ontario homeowners say they intend to participate in this year's Earth Hour Saturday between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m.

Research undertaken by Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) found 73 per cent of respondents plan to participate this year—up from the 51 per cent planned participation rate indicated in last year's survey.

When compared to a typical Saturday night in late March, Ontarians' actions during Earth Hour 2009 contributed to an overall drop in demand for electricity of 920 megawatts (MW), which is equivalent to the peak energy needs of Mississauga at this time of year.

Earth Hour is an annual international "lights out" event led by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) with the goal of having as many individuals and businesses as possible turn off their lights for one hour to show their support for action on climate change. The IESO will be monitoring the minute-by-minute changes in demand for electricity and ensuring there is generation available to respond to the changing conditions.

Shutting off the lights and limiting power use for one hour certainly is not going to save the planet or solve the problem of climate change.

However, it is hoped this exercise to increase public awareness of the need to decrease energy use encourages people to think of every day ways to reduce their energy consumption.

Locally, in 2009, Halton Hills achieved a 13.5% energy consumption reduction, representing nearly 8,000kWh or enough electricity to power about 6,500 homes for an hour.

The IESO survey also indicates more Ontarians plan to take concrete steps to reduce their electricity consumption and, if that is the case, all Ontario will be better off and Earth Hour will have played a role.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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The Independent & Free Press

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WEB POLL RESULTS

Starting March 31 the general minimum wage in Ontario will rise 75 cents to \$10.25 an hour.
 Do you feel this is a fair wage?

- No (48%)
- Yes (52%)

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Letters to the editor

HST is simply a cash grab

(This letter was sent to Premier Dalton McGuinty. A copy was made available for publication.)

Mr. McGuinty,

For the life of me, I can't see how you can think that the HST will benefit the citizens of Ontario.

Do you really think that the people of Ontario are really that gullible? Obviously you do.

With the uncertainty of the economy at this present time, numerous citizens out of work, others worried if they will even have a job tomorrow, why on earth would you even think of increasing the taxes of the people of Ontario? It's through no fault of our own that this province's finances have been mismanaged, except for those who chose to re-elect you to a second term.

My husband and I are employed at Bombardier earning respectable incomes, but I have had a wage freeze for the past two years, and his wages were frozen for six months. Paying an extra 8 per cent on absolutely everything we purchase or consume (i.e. hydro and gas) will set all of us back substan-

tially. How can it not?

This is nothing more than a government money grab. You are so out of touch with the people of Ontario, and might I add the obvious—the voters of Ontario.

My mother and father are concerned as to how they will manage when this tax comes into effect (and they planned very well for retirement), but I guess you think that they will be so much better off. Please sir, do the math.

We all know that once this tax takes effect, we expect you will all be giving yourselves a well-deserved increase (in your eyes only) and will be able to sleep at night.

You won't even hold a legitimate public forum on this matter. Numerous petitions have been sent around to no avail.

Sleep well Mr. Premier as a politician always does. And may I remind you that you represent the constituents who put you there. For once, I wish you would have a conscience, act accordingly and truly represent the people of Ontario.

P.S. Don't bother answering this correspondence with a standard form letter—we've all seen enough of them.

Carolyn MacColl,
Georgetown

Why oppose plan?

Dear editor,

Regarding the Clean Train Coalition's letter of March 9, (Metrolinx plan is a reason for outrage) I am confused as to their expectations.

Do they expect Metrolinx, having had a choice between Plan A and Plan B at the outset, that they would immediately invoke Plan B because the Coalition had succeeded in slowing the completion of Plan A? They probably would not and, so, a delay in Plan A leads to a delay of the services suggested by Plan A.

Far from feeling your called-for outrage, I am surprised that anyone would expect vast all-day train service to Georgetown when buses already provide this and when there does not seem to be a huge demand for it.

And, I wonder how we can ever expect to build a serious mass transit network in this region if, in every backyard, it must pass near where sits someone who will try to stop it in its tracks.

Matthew Buckley-Golder,
Georgetown