

# Science Matters

By David Suzuki



## Powerwise campaign gets things started

One of the most interesting things I learned while crossing Canada earlier this year is that Canadians are excited about embracing change. People are sick of just hearing about problems like air pollution and global warming – they want to do something about them.

That's why I volunteered for an energy-conservation ad campaign for Powerwise, a partnership between local Ontario electrical utilities and the Government of Ontario. We've completed two television commercials and some print and outdoor advertising, all of which folks in Ontario can expect to see plenty of this summer.

For the local electrical utilities, their main goal is to reduce electrical consumption and avoid brownouts, where demand for power outstrips supply. California used similar public-awareness campaigns to successfully reduce its electricity consumption. I hope Powerwise has a similar effect in Ontario.

While avoiding brownouts is an obvious benefit, reducing our electricity consumption is also extremely important from a public and environmental health perspective. Generating electricity can have significant environmental and social costs, depending on the source of the power. Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia, for example, generate the majority of their power from coal, which has a large air pollution and global warming footprint.

Other provinces use combinations of hydroelectricity, oil, natural gas, diesel and other fuels to generate electricity. Ontario is blessed with a huge land base and obtains a quarter of its electricity from large-scale hydroelectric dams. Although dams don't burn fossil fuels, they do flood vast areas of land. And the decomposition of organic matter under that water can release substantial amounts of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

More than half of Ontario's power actually comes from nuclear energy, which is generally perceived as having a smaller carbon footprint than fossil fuels. But nuclear power plants are enormously complex and expensive, and they still suffer from waste storage and safety concerns. And although they don't release greenhouse gases when generating electricity, they certainly do "upstream," since mining the fuels, building the power plants and disposing of the waste are all tremendously energy intensive. Another 18 per cent of Ontario's power comes from fossil fuels – largely coal.

Low-impact renewable energy, like wind power, has only recently started making inroads into Ontario. These energy sources emit very little in the way of air pollutants or greenhouse gases. In theory, most new electricity demand in the province could be met through the use of low-impact renewables, but only if we get serious about energy conservation – hence, the ads. My hope is that Ontario doesn't have to build expensive and unreliable nuclear power plants, or polluting coal-fired generators. We can accomplish that, and put that money into renewable energy instead, but only if we develop a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

That won't happen overnight. In fact, at first glance, the focus of the ads may seem like pretty small potatoes – changing lightbulbs and getting rid of old beer fridges, for example. But we have to start somewhere and, when millions of people make small changes, they really add up. That's why I, and my foundation, volunteered to help with the ads. We want to help people in Ontario, and ultimately the entire country, to start down a road to conservation.

Really, the ads are just a beginning. But the small steps they represent will start a new way of looking at things and a new way of thinking about electricity. We certainly can't stop at these small steps. But even small steps can take you a great distance if you make enough of them.



**PENTECOST IN THE PARK:** Despite a driving rain, a small group of Acton residents gathered at the new Rotary bandshell in Prospect Park recently for a Pentecost in the Park service to mark the birth of Christianity, 50 days after Easter. – Frances Niblock photo

## Streak-free tanning- Not!

I am the one who loves to bask in the sun while on vacation. I purposely avoid sun block while working in the yard. My mom scolds me and reminds me that I need protection.

I don't do it to hurt myself; I am just one of those vain people who think they look better with a tan, even if it means having a small sunburn. Yet, sometimes, I try to go for other options to give myself that sun-kissed glow I think I need.

Enter Sublime Bronze, a self-tanning gelee that is streak free and quick drying. I will admit my after-holiday glow is sometimes self-enhanced. This past week, after the opening day of the Trunk Sale, I found myself with tanned arms and face - and the rest of me that awful pasty white. Friday night, after a glorious soak in the tub, where I scrubbed and pampered, I found myself looking at the tube of bronze. I couldn't resist. I had to rid myself of my pasty white legs. After all, I was to attend a family function Saturday and I wanted to look nice.

So with that, I slathered on the lotion. However, in the past, I had avoided my legs. The instructions indicate to use sparingly around ankles, knees and elbows. Let skin dry before putting on clothes. Heck,



By  
Angela Tyler

I didn't need to read the instructions. I had used it before.

After slathering on the gelee, I decided the best way to self-dry would be to stand naked in front of the oscillating fan. This drew odd looks from both the Dude and the dog. I didn't care though, as I was off to having a safe, cancer-free sun-kissed glow.

After drying, or so I thought, I noticed my feet were a little rough. I decided to put on some special foot cream and a pair of socks to enhance the effect of the cream, as I had read in so many magazines. Everything seemed perfect. I would be glowing and have silky smooth feet. That was, until I woke up the next morning.

I woke up to find the socks had done more than make my feet soft. The socks seemed to enhance the production of the self tanner and my feet were this awful dirt brown, or at least parts of my feet were. The sides were still ghostly white. When I looked further, I noticed my legs were streaky. I looked at

the bottle. What happened to streak free? I looked like a circus side-show freak.

In a panic, I headed to the shower before the Dude could see what I had turned into. He had told me many times that he wished I wouldn't use that stuff. At this point I didn't need to be reminded. In the shower, I scrubbed and I scrubbed. I even took a kitchen scouring pad to my feet and legs and scrubbed some more. Nothing was working.

So with that, I did the unspeakable. I got out of the shower, went into the cabinet under the sink and reached for the Scrubbing Bubbles bathroom cleaner with bleach and headed back into the shower. I was truly desperate. It was at that point the Dude stuck his head into the bathroom.

"You aren't putting that stuff on your skin are you?" he asked. Was I? No, I was putting it on the scrubbing pad before I put it on my skin. It didn't matter if I had soap or Scrubbing Bubbles with bleach. This stuff wasn't coming off until it was ready to.

In the end, I am suffering from my own vanity for wanting a healthy sun-kissed glow, over done in self-tanning lotion. Lesson learned. I figure I'll be wearing long pants until at least September.



**THE NEW TANNER**  
PUBLISHING LTD.

373 Queen Street East, Unit 1  
Acton, Ontario L7J 2N2  
email: [thenewtanner@on.aibn.com](mailto:thenewtanner@on.aibn.com)

(519) 853-0051 Fax: (519) 853-0052

### Publisher

Ted Tyler

### Editorial

Hartley Coles

### Editorial Contributors

Frances Niblock Mike O'Leary Angela Tyler  
Rebecca Ring

### Advertising and Circulation

Marie Shadbolt Bruce Cargill

### Composing

Danielle Mclsaac

Distributed to every home in Acton and area as well as adjoining communities.

Every effort will be made to see advertising copy, neatly presented, is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors or omissions in advertising, but will gladly reprint without charge that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur provided a claim is made within five days of publication.

All articles, advertisements and graphic artwork appearing in The New Tanner is copyrighted. Any usage, reproduction or publication of these items, in whole or in part, without the express written consent of the publisher of The New Tanner is a copyright infringement and subject to legal action.