

# OPINION

## Power surge

Most people believe cleaner and alternative forms of energy should be produced in Ontario, and want governments to support initiatives that provide domestic economic benefits and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. But are citizens willing to pay the cost of this massive paradigm shift?

Investment in wind, solar and hydroelectric generation has made Ontario a leader in North America. The progressive Green Energy Act addresses public desire to invest and develop alternative energy sources.

Previous generations invested billions of dollars to create the energy system we depend on today. It's been 20 years since Ontario made any significant investments in power generation and infrastructure.

As the Province moves ahead with investments in new energy infrastructure, consumers are alarmed about the prospect of increased electricity costs. The government's energy policies have become a punching bag for opposition leaders. But the truth is, huge amounts of money are needed to modernize the electricity system in the 21st century. The government is being up front by admitting rates will jump 46 per cent over five years, although consumers will get 10 per cent rebates on each bill.

The premier acknowledges plans to develop more wind, solar and other renewable forms of energy are responsible for about 56 per cent of the expected increases in electricity rates. The remaining 44 per cent is for investment in upgrading and modernizing Ontario's existing capacity in nuclear and natural gas generation, transmission and distribution.

The government claims 82 per cent of existing infrastructure needs to be refurbished or replaced. What is the cost of not doing anything? Dependable energy is a staple for economic investment and growth.

Rate hikes will hopefully promote further conservation efforts while reducing the significant health-care costs associated with smog, saving an estimated \$3 billion per year.

The government's green energy vision is a long-term plan. Like most policy shifts of this magnitude, there will be painful transitions. But on so many levels, it's the right thing to do morally, ethically and economically. Rising costs for electricity may be shocking to some, but the reality is consumers are being asked to invest in the creation of a reliable, renewable, clean system of power for today and the future.



## ReadersWrite

Email letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com. Letters, which may be edited, must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

### Downtown tree-lighting terrific

DEAR EDITOR:

What a terrific event. On November 26 beside the Mill Pond, the Downtown Milton Tree Lighting Ceremony attracted plenty of Miltonians, despite the frigid temperatures.

The Montessori School of Milton did exceptionally well in their singing

of 'O Christmas Tree,' as well as their very entertaining rendition of 'A Christmas Medley.' The Holy Rosary School choir treated us with their heartwarming version of 'Mary Did You Know' and 'O Little Town of Bethlehem.' E.C. Drury High School's Glee Club performed an amazing adaptation of 'O Christmas Tree,' as well as their very entertaining rendition of 'A Christmas Medley.' The Holy Rosary School choir treated us with their heartwarming version of 'Mary Did You Know' and 'O Little Town of Bethlehem.' E.C. Drury High School's Glee Club performed an amazing adaptation of 'O Christmas Tree,' as well as their very entertaining rendition of 'A Christmas Medley.'

• see THANKS on page A7

## Upfront

### Return trips to my alma mater not exactly welcomed

As far as illogical fears go, this one's a doozy.

Well, I can't claim to actually being afraid whenever I visit my alma mater of Sheridan College — the latest trip happening just recently for volleyball championship play — but there's certainly a level of unease venturing back into the world of academia.

No, I didn't flunk out of school. I never even failed a class, although I did come close once or twice. There's just something about learning in a structured environment that made me somewhat uncomfortable at the tail-end of high school — and beyond.

And oddly enough, the phobia's only gotten worse since my school days have ended.

Often triggered by updates about my scholastically-inclined little cousin — who's just begun art history PhD studies at Carleton University — I regularly have fitful dreams where I'm back in school and bombing out.

Sometimes I'm in high school and during others it's college. But the recurring aura is always the same — dark and gloomy. The dreams usually conclude with me rhyming off all the assignments I've neglected to complete and then boiling over in a haze of stress.

In the latest one, I don't even make it to school — and wake up as I'm running to

catch the school bus.

When it comes to unwelcome nighttime scenarios, these rival any bogeyman I ever conjured up as a youngster — and have been the focus of much self-analysis.

Near as I can figure, these dreams tie into the fact that being a reporter has a definite parallel to being in school (essay writing, deadlines, etc.) and my subconscious is saying I should never get TOO comfortable in my job and strive to

stave off complacency.

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Steve LeBlanc

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