

Save moraine group wins national award

A group instrumental in pressing the provincial government to protect the Oak Ridges Moraine was honoured with a national award this week.

Save The Oak Ridges Moraine, which has fought for 12 years to preserve the scenic landform, was given a gold prize in the Sustainable Living category at the Canadian Environment Awards, chosen

by readers of Canadian Geographic.

STORM's executive director Debbie Crandall of Caledon, who attended the awards dinner at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Que. with fellow director Dorothy Izzard of King, said STORM will spend \$5,000 accompanying the award "on our new focus, sustaining the moraine" by making certain

the province's conservation plan and legislation are fully implemented.

Ms Crandall served last year on a panel which drafted the moraine plan. She now advises the province on "smart growth."

The magazine said it wanted to recognize Canadians who act locally to protect and restore the environment.

Why Is My Current Electricity Bill So High?

Hotter Weather and Your Bill

Your current bill may be unusually high. Consumption and price are directly related to increased temperatures and humidity. We have experienced one of the hottest summers on record, resulting in increased air conditioning loads, especially through the months of July and August. Remember, your current bill represents your consumption for the previous two months. Due to the hot weather, your water consumption is also most likely higher than normal.

In this open market, the price of electricity is based on the spot market price, which fluctuates based on demand. Your bill reflects these fluctuating prices. The increased demand for electricity has driven the commodity price upward during this period. All these factors contribute to higher than normal summer bills.

Although we experienced record-breaking temperatures and load requirements, the average electricity price since market opening on May 1, 2002 is approximately 5.09 cents per kWh. The good news is that as temperatures cool off this fall, so should the price. For updated information on commodity prices, visit the Independent Market Operator (IMO) web site at www.imo.com

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MARKHAM HYDRO - Visit our Web site for current, easy to understand information on the new market at www.markhamhydro.com. Feel free to call our Customer Accounts Department at 905-477-3844, if you have questions on the open market, your bill and standard supply service or if you're moving and require a meter reading. Our Customer Accounts Representatives will be pleased to help you.

YOUR RETAILER If you are bound by a retailer contract, only they can answer questions regarding your electricity commodity charge or other contract details. If you are represented by an electricity retailer and have received a bill without a commodity charge, we suggest you contact your retailer directly. This missed amount may be applied to your next bill. Their name and phone number appears at the bottom of your Markham Hydro statement.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

Markham Hydro Distribution Inc. - www.markhamhydro.com

Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology - www.est.gov.on.ca

Electricity Distributors Association - www.eda.on.ca

Independent Market Operator (IMO) - www.imo.com

Ontario Energy Board - www.oeb.gov.on.ca



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Department of
Paediatrics Presents: Ask Dr. Bear

Dear Dr. Bear,

Could you please tell me about Complimentary/Alternative Medicine in Paediatric Care?

Yours truly,
Unsured Parents

Dear Unsured Parents,

In the past century, medical care has come to be provided by conventional practitioners such as nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, etc. There has however, always been a group of practitioners who offer care based on differing philosophies. These models are meant to either replace standard methods, or in addition to them. Recently these alternative and complementary methods have been assuming an increasing role in health care. In this discussion, I propose to review this topic, with a focus on the care of children.

Studies have shown that 20% of adults in Canada have used alternative therapies. In the United States, studies have shown that 20-30% of children visiting paediatric clinics have used alternative therapy, including up to 70% of children with chronic diseases. Herbal remedies, mostly of no proven value, account for sales of \$1.5 billion per year in North America.

Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic is the third largest regulated health care profession in North America, with approximately 5000 practitioners in Canada. In the US, nearly 1 billion dollars was spent on chiropractic care for children in 1998.

In 1997, the Association of Chiropractic Colleges stated that, "chiropractic is concerned with the preservation and restoration of health, and focuses particular attention on the subluxation". That is, if these bones are subluxated or partially out of alignment, they can cause pressure on spinal nerves. It is felt that this pressure is the basis of medical illness.

The question is whether chiropractic is beneficial in non-musculoskeletal conditions. In a survey of Canadian chiropractors that treat children, 7% of visits were for treatment of headache, 5% for ear infections, and 23% for treatment of conditions such as asthma, learning disabilities, colic, and bed-wetting. Yet there is no evidence that chiropractic is of any benefit in any of these conditions. In a recent statement, the Chiefs of Canadian Academic Departments of Paediatrics have denounced the use of chiropractic for non-medical conditions in children. This is a position I believe is shared by the vast majority of paediatricians in Canada.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic therapy is based on the principles of similars - that a substance that can cause symptoms in a healthy person can stimulate self-healing in an illness with those symptoms - even if it has been diluted so many times as to be undetectable. Homeopathic therapy is very commonly used in Europe and North America, and there have been studies suggesting that it is of some benefit in conditions such as allergy, ear infections and diarrhoea. However, these studies involved small numbers of children, and had several flaws. It is very difficult to make any conclusions about homeopathy, and all claims supporting it must be examined carefully.

One issue of major concern to me is the negative opinion that exists among many practitioners of alternative health care towards immunization against infectious disease. This opinion has been studied amongst chiropractors. In the US, 36% of chiropractors believed that there are no scientific proof that immunizations prevent disease. This belief is simply wrong. At the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, a study published in June 2002, 29% of graduating students had anti-vaccination attitudes. As a paediatrician, I firmly believe that the benefits of vaccination have been proven beyond doubt, and that severe side effects are very rare. Even the Canadian Chiropractic Association, in a 1997 statement, supports vaccination as a "cost-effective and clinically efficient public health preventative procedure." It is the responsibility of every health care professional involved in the treatment of children to advocate the use of vaccination to prevent serious and possibly fatal disease.

It is clear that practitioners of complementary and alternative medicine provide a service that is valued by those they serve. The individual attention, comprehensive assessments, and focus on prevention and lifestyle are worthy models for all health care providers, including physicians. Yet objectivity and evidence must be the foundation of health care practice. It is the responsibility of all of us - parents, physicians, and complementary health practitioners, to use methods that have been carefully assessed and constantly evaluated. This is especially true when children are involved. §

Yours truly,
Dr. Bear

Dr. Leo Levin

Dr. Levin graduated from the University of Manitoba with his MD. He completed his Paediatric training at the Hospital for Sick Children with a special interest in Nephrology. Upon completion of his Paediatric fellowship, he opened a practice in Markham with Dr. Larry Pancer. Dr. Levin joined the Medical Staff at Markham Stouffville Hospital when it opened in 1990. He was the Chief of the Department of Paediatrics from 1991 to 2001. Dr. Levin maintains his affiliation with The Hospital for Sick Children.



Dr. Leo Levin

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