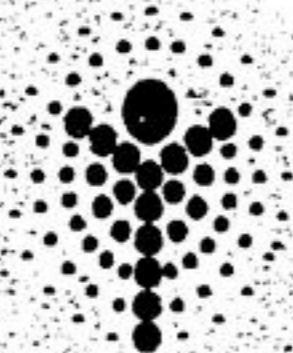


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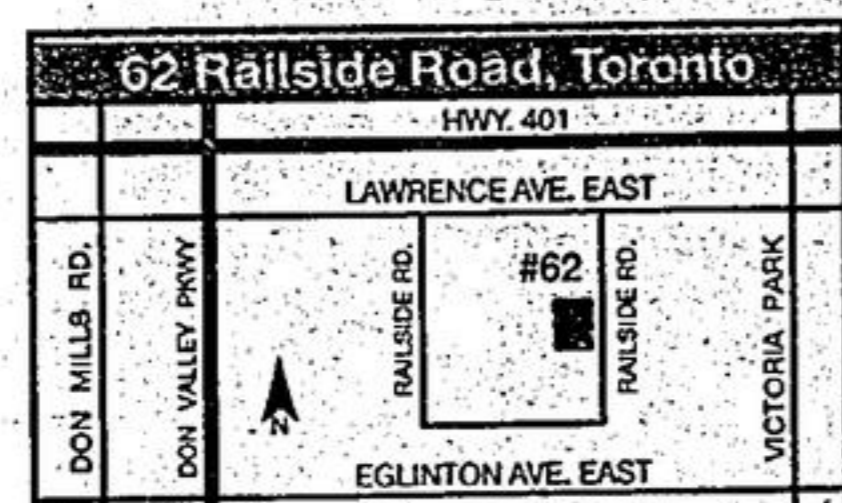
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Quick-fix needed to keep lights on

*New transformer station,
conservation part of plan*

BY CAROLINE GRECH
Staff Writer

Conserve energy.

Like or not, that's what York Region residents will have to do to avoid brownouts and blackouts as early as this winter, Hydro One says.

While a transformer station being built in King Township will provide a temporary solution to the region's hydro shortages, it won't be finished until 2008, forcing users to focus on conservation.

This week, the Ontario Energy Board gave York Region utilities two weeks to assemble a plan to build a King transmission station within two years.

The additional station will take some pressure off the region's strained hydro system, providing enough power until 2011 and possibly beyond if conservation efforts exceed expectations, Newmarket Hydro president Paul Ferguson said.

"This is an element in a larger solution," Mr. Ferguson said, adding the Ontario Power Authority has four com-

ponents to the plan.

Other initiatives include a generation station to be constructed somewhere in northern York Region, another transmission station to be built in the future and increased conservation efforts.

The King transmission station, which will be built by Hydro One, will not create a noticeable increase in local hydro rates, Mr. Ferguson added. The station is expected to be constructed near Dufferin Street and Miller Road.

York Region's hydro system has been overwhelmed by a constantly growing population over the past few years, with about 35,000 people moving here annually.

While the King project is expected to be finished within two years, Hydro One has stressed York Region residents will face brown outs and blackouts as early as 2006 and 2007 if action isn't taken.

In the interim, local utilities will be working in conjunction with the Ontario Power Authority on conservation programs for residents and businesses.

Large industries in the region will be asked to voluntarily reduce consumption and will receive compensation for their efforts as part of the stepped up conservation plan, Mr. Ferguson said.



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LOCATION: Angus Glen Community Centre, Room #2
3990 Major Mackenzie Drive East
Markham

TIME: 7:30pm

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