

# Proposed energy act stirs debate

BY CHRIS TRABER  
Staff Writer

After being introduced earlier this week, public opinion about the proposed Green Energy Act is likely split.

On one hand, York Region taxpayers, already feeling the fiscal noose, won't appreciate the province's long reach into their pockets and wallets. While environmentalists and realtors laud the move.

If passed, anyone looking to sell their house or condominium in Ontario will have to absorb a \$300 energy audit, through a contractor's energy assessment, before handing over the keys.

You don't need to take action. It's simply a measure to let potential buyers know the energy efficiency of your domain — much like the detailed vehicle history available to prospective auto buyers.

The legislation was unveiled by Energy Minister George Smitherman in order to boost incentives for electricity conservation and encourage renewable sources of energy.

Aurora's Windfall Ecology Centre executive director Brent Kopperson is calling it a giant step forward.

"Really, this is part of what it is going to take to create a culture of conservation in Ontario," he said. "It's a great thing."

The Act lays the foundation for new energy conservation measures and a new renewable energy procurement policy that will make Ontario a leader in green energy and green jobs, he said.

Conservative Thornhill MPP Peter Shurman begs to differ.

"The \$300 is the tip of a very large iceberg," he said. "It's a hidden tax on homeowners. It

points to a (Dalton) McGuinty government that hasn't introduced something good without something harming."

Ontario's timing and intent is suspect, Mr. Shurman said.

"The government is taking the last best investment in the majority of people's lives and adding a hidden tax," he said. "Now, in a recession, they're going to smack you with this as well."

"I'm not arguing against green energy,

but the McGuinty government is playing for optics at a time when we can least afford it. What they've effectively done is put themselves in the real estate business."

Mr. Shurman suggested the assessment will become a bargaining chip for home buyers, using the energy analysis and its cost to negotiate price with sellers.

"We've received a lot of calls and e-mails already," the MPP said. "There will be significant public debate."

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U12 Girls	1997	Glad Park Public School	Mar. 23 & Mar. 30	Monday	6:30-8:00 pm
U13 Girls	1996	St. Brigid Catholic School	Mar. 31 Apr. 3 Apr. 7	Tuesday Friday Tuesday	6:30-8:00 pm 6:30-8:00 pm 6:30-8:00 pm
U13 Boys	1996	St. Brigid Catholic School Stouffville High School	Mar. 24 Mar. 27	Tuesday Friday	6:30-8:00 pm 6:30-8:00 pm

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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

### Health Canada Advisory on RetroFoam Insulation

Health Canada was recently advised that RetroFoam has been installed in a limited number of homes in Ontario. This product is prohibited for sale in Canada.

Health Canada is informing consumers that RetroFoam insulation is a urea formaldehyde-based thermal insulation, a type of insulation that has been prohibited for sale in Canada under the Hazardous Products Act since December 1980, as it may release formaldehyde gas into indoor air.

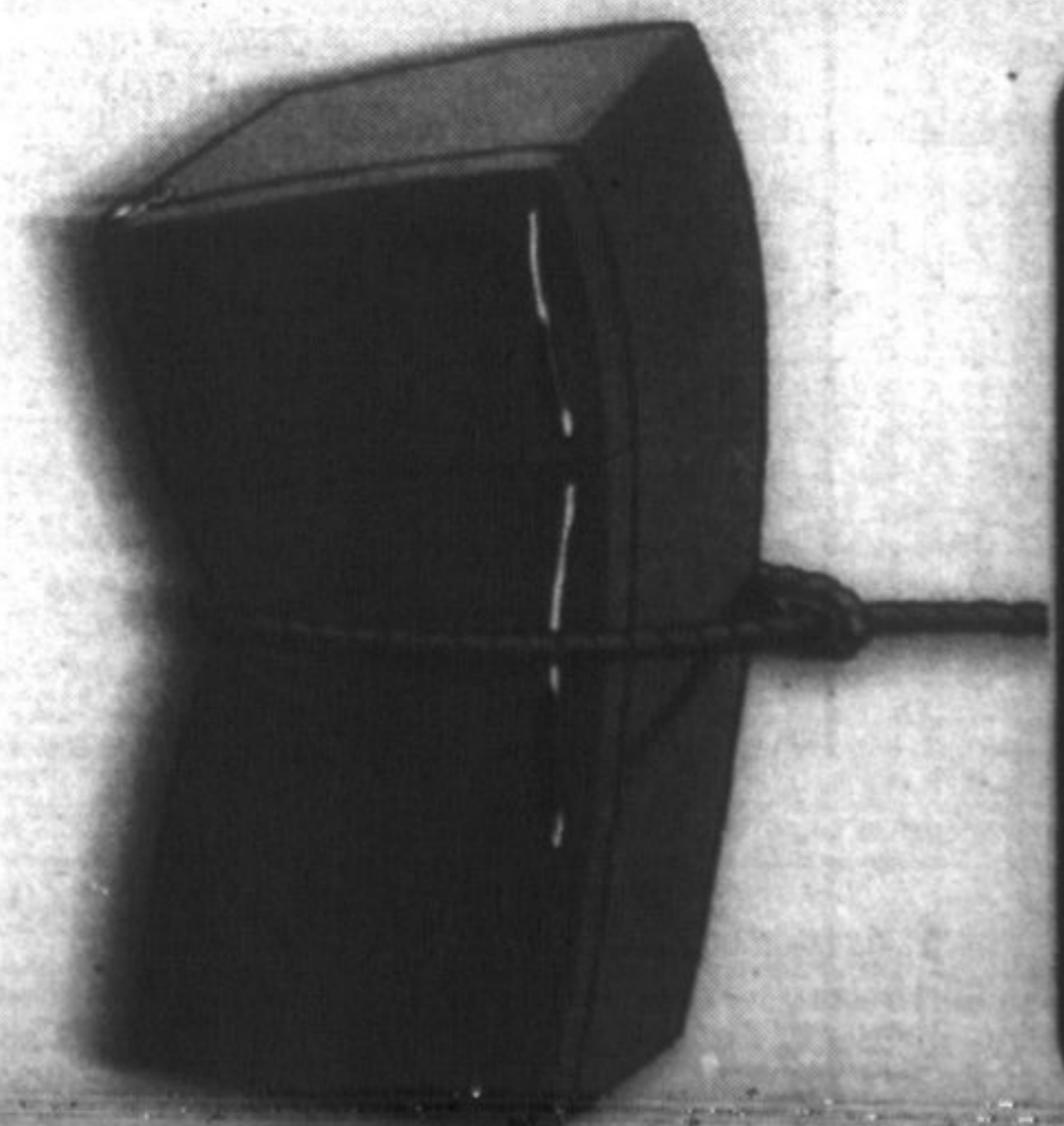
Health Canada issued a "cease and desist" letter to RetroFoam of Canada Incorporated, the Canadian importer of the insulation, to stop all importation and sale of RetroFoam in Canada. Health Canada also instructed Enerliv, the Canadian distributor of RetroFoam, to stop all sale, advertisement and further installations of the product and to call back any unused product. As a result of Health Canada's actions, RetroFoam is no longer available for sale or installation in Canada.

Health Canada will be communicating with affected homeowners to provide further details on how they can obtain Government support for having their indoor air quality tested.

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