

To the Editor, Sault Ste. Marie This Week:

Re: Watch dog group expects higher electricity prices

The current Energy Minister claims that electricity bills will increase by only 1% annually. Let's do the math. 80% of our power generating resources are being replaced by power resources that cost 2 times, 3 times and even 10 times more costly than current resources. These are generated by private power marketers who earn a profit. Add the delivery costs that Hydro One has been granted – 10.6% now (20%-25% in some areas) and another 13.3 % in 2011. Add the 8% Harmonized Sales Tax that will be tacked on this summer. Add the 30% increase administration fees for the energy ministry and 4 agencies with overlapping functions. Add 5% - the \$10 Billion dollars for conservation programs. Add 5% for natural gas support payments. Add in the fact that when Time-Of-Use Pricing (smart meters) comes into effect we will pay 33%-60% higher rates during normal weekday waking hours. Add in the costs that will filter down to all consumers when businesses and the farming community pay 33%-60% higher rates during normal business hours.

We challenge MPPs Mr. Duguid and Mr. Oraziotti to refute this information and to provide concrete evidence to support their claims. Tell us why wind and solar requires backup generation in the form of 10,000 – 12,000 MW of natural gas. Show us that natural gas-fired generation installed in the GTA and the sensitive Holland Marsh is better than distant coal-fired generation equipped with best emissions reduction technology when Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Ontario Power Generation information demonstrates the difference in emissions profile is negligible.

The Sault residents, like most Ontarians, are concerned about the cost of electricity and home heating. Let's have a public forum – a debate – with our MPPs to clarify the numbers.

Carol Chudy
Co-Chair, CAE Alliance