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# Fight to save LGS will continue

## PREMIER TO BE GREETED BY DEMONSTRATORS TODAY

By GEORGE MATHEWSON  
The Observer

The battle to save the Lambton Generating Station will go on despite the McGuinty government's announced timetable to close it and other coal-burning power stations, supporters vow.

An unprecedented coalition of local citizens, politicians and workers has found common cause in a plant they say is fundamental to Sarnia-Lambton's future.

"People are starting to realize this will have a huge impact," said Sue Grant, co-organizer of the citizen group Clean Afford-

able Energy Alliance.

"We're going to keep plugging away because it's up to the people to let (Premier Dalton) McGuinty know they won't stand for this."

Buoyed by a recent outpouring of community support, the group plans to demonstrate today when McGuinty attends an ethanol plant groundbreaking near Mooretown.

The premier is expected to announce more than \$500 million to build more ethanol plants in the province.

To save LGS, Sarnia's building trades and the Sarnia Construction Association, which together represent more than

5,000 local workers, are circulating petitions, placing ads and lobbying MPPs of all parties.

"We've got to redouble our efforts to keep it open. The government made an election promise but they didn't realize all the costs involved," said the association's Ray Curran.

The province said Wednesday it will close the Lambton, Atikokan and Thunder Bay generating stations by 2007, but keep the larger Nanticoke station open until 2009.

Critics say shutting Lambton will erode the local tax base and result in the loss of almost 400 direct jobs and hundreds more in spinoff businesses.

Another fear is the potential flight of Chemical Valley companies as coal is replaced by more expensive electricity from

natural gas-fired generation, said Ross Tius, business agent of the Pipefitters, Local 663.

"You're going to see major clients look to relocate."

The Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce estimates the closure will mean the loss of \$33 million in local tax assessment.

As workers leave Sarnia-Lambton, housing will be devalued, with property tax losses of \$53 million, said board chairperson Sheryl Bovay.

"It is noteworthy that in the June 15 announcements the economy of Ontario is not mentioned."

Curran said the government, in its push to eliminate harmful coal emissions, is ignoring affordable alternatives.



McGuinty



Grant

For half the cost of a new gas plant, LGS could be outfitted with two additional scrubbers to remove most of the smog-causing substances released by burning coal, he said.

"The frustrating thing is technology exists to reduce emissions but they won't even look at it.

"Natural gas is fine if you have a large supply, but we don't. We don't know what the hell the cost will be."