

An Energy-Efficient Ontario Power Authority's Conservation

Conservation and demand management are two of the most important things we can do to manage Ontario's electricity supply challenges. Many Local Distribution Companies (LDCs) have been implementing conservation activities in their communities for several years. Recently the Ontario Minister of Energy charged the Ontario Power Authority with the responsibility for funding these activities. The OPA, will be working in the coming months to fulfill these new responsibilities, and it hopes to continue its successful collaboration with LDCs to execute these types of programs.

LDCs are on the front lines of delivery for CDM programs. Their participation as key partners is crucial if the programs are to be effective. Local electricity distributors have the reach across sectors, strong community links, and are the face and voice of "the electricity company" to customers in a complex and evolving marketplace. LDCs throughout the province have worked closely with the OPA to deliver some recent CDM programs to Ontario electricity users. Here are a few examples:

Every Kilowatt Counts

The Every Kilowatt Counts program was created to give Ontarians the ability to make effective conservation decisions, and it provided financial incentives to do so. In late April 2006, delivery began of a booklet with energy-saving tips and money-saving coupons to all 4.58 million homes in Ontario. The coupons offered savings on a selection of energy-efficient products -- ENERGY STAR(r) rated compact fluorescent light bulbs, programmable thermostats, electric timers, and ENERGY STAR rated ceiling fans. The coupons were redeemable at more than 20 different retailers representing 2,100 stores in more than 400 communities.

About 80 local electricity distributors participated in the Every Kilowatt Counts program - from Atikokan to Woodstock, from Aylmer to Whitby. LDCs were instrumental in the campaign. The booklets, distributed to every Ontario household, were co-branded with LDC logos, and utility customer mailing lists were used for delivery. LDC call centres fielded questions from customers, and they made additional coupon books available. Several LDCs placed ads in the local newspaper to promote the program, and others participated in communities where launch events were held.

Collaboration with the LDCs on Every Kilowatt Counts began in the program's development phase -- utilities provided comments and feedback on its design and approach. Web-based seminars held prior to the launch were well-attended and provided an opportunity

for questions and clarification. A survey of LDCs conducted in early June to obtain reaction and satisfaction levels with the campaign showed most were satisfied and would participate again.

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"This was the first program of its type in the province, and we were delighted with the participation of the LDCs," says John Jeza, director of residential CDM programs at the OPA. "They came on board in a short timeframe and really made a difference in the program delivery and execution. We want to build on this experience and incorporate LDC feedback into the design of the fall program."

Feedback from the utilities, for example, requested that more flexibility be available

Partnership

Bureau Programs



for the promotions fund, so that they can promote the program in ways other than print advertising. This will be incorporated for the fall campaign.

While the Every Kilowatt Counts program will continue to the end of August and coupons are still coming in, early results indicate that householder participation is on target to meet the goal of an 8.7 MW reduction in demand.

Refrigerator Retirement Program

The refrigerator retirement program is intended to retire older, inefficient fridges. As one of the biggest consumers of electricity in the household, older fridges use three to four times the amount of electricity as new energy-efficient units.

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Not only does this program offer consumers the chance to reduce energy use and save

money, it can also reduce landfill use by decommissioning the retired units in a best-in-class, environmentally friendly manner. It is being run as a pilot to make sure it is the best and most cost-effective program possible before launching it province-wide - different levels of promotion and incentive are being tested to determine what combination produces the best results. The program is currently being offered in Barrie, Mississauga, Kingston, the Hamilton/Niagara Region, St. Catharines, Windsor and Timmins.

Again, local utilities are essential in the success of the program. When approached to participate, all the LDCs in the program communities agreed. They participated in launch events in each of the regions, which in some cases were held as a "retirement party." The LDC logos were used in bill inserts and in media advertising.

This program will run through to the end of September; when it will be evaluated to determine the logistics for a broader, province-wide program.

Another group of LDCs, the Niagara Erie Power Association (NEPA), is also collecting older refrigerators this summer. "We are encouraged that these utilities recognize the energy conservation potential here, so much so that they are running the program on their own," says John Jeza. "While most of these NEPA communities are outside of our pilot program, we did coordinate with the association on their campaign, and

we are pleased with their initiative."

Working together

These two programs are recent examples of how the OPA and LDCs can work together to implement effective and cost-efficient CDM programs. Programs that cover sectors other than residential are also being planned.

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"We recognize the significant impact that LDC involvement has on CDM program uptake and results," says Peter Love, Ontario's Chief Energy Conservation Officer. "Their contributions and efforts play an important role in easing some of the issues facing Ontario's electricity system. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with local distribution companies across the province to provide information and tools needed to meet the goal for a more energy-efficient Ontario."