

Technology as Kingpin

PowerStream Salutes the Energy Conservation Devices that are Helping to Change Conservation Behaviours

Just as a plan is nothing without a strong underlying vision coupled with a steady hand on execution, so is it unfathomable to think of changing energy conservation attitudes and behaviours without the appropriate tools.

Tools that were unavailable just a few short years ago are now mainstream, and with them price points that are making all manner of energy-conservation devices, from bulbs to washing machines, more affordable.

Consider the energy savings made possible through the use of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). During the 2005-2007 reporting years, PowerStream distributed 20,780 CFLs and took a total of 1,246,800 kilowatt-hours off the local grid as a result.

Equally promising were seasonal LED light string exchange programs. Through community events and coupon promotions, PowerStream customers decreased energy consumption by switching from incandescent bulbs to this type of LED bulb.

Solar power is another example of technology that has become more mainstream in recent years. Consider The Home Depot store located at Highways 7 and 400. Solar power panels capable of generating 20 kilowatts were installed on the roof of the garden centre in summer 2007 - a clear illustration of the company's commitment to energy-saving technology.

PowerStream is also using solar technology, not just to demonstrate its energy-saving potential, but also to conserve energy at the utility's new corporate headquarters in Vaughan. As noted earlier in this report, nine solar photovoltaic towers capable of producing 17 kilowatts of electricity have been installed on the new site, providing the opportunity to save 28,396 kilowatt-hours annually.

Programmable thermostats are another illustration of how far technology has progressed in a relatively short period of time. Five years ago, programmable thermostats were considered a rarity; but today, having become more widely used, programmable thermostats are the foundation for residential and small commercial peak demand reduction programs such as *peaksaver*®. During the 2006-2007 reporting period, 2,055 PowerStream customers signed up to be peak savers and to have Honeywell programmable thermostats installed in their homes, allowing PowerStream to cycle the devices down to save electricity during periods of peak demand.

Smart meters provide one final example of how energy-saving technology is helping to build Ontario's conservation culture. The Province of Ontario has mandated the installation of smart meters for all residential and small business customers in Ontario by December 31, 2010. More than one million units were installed across the province by year-end 2007, with more than 82,000 of them in PowerStream's service territory. ■

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PowerStream, the third largest local electricity distribution company in Ontario, delivers power to more than 240,000 residential and business customers in the municipalities of Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

