

Thunder Bay Hydro Launches the Phantom Load Education Campaign

Many good studies on conservation are done, then after a short period of time they are relegated to sit on a shelf. With this in mind, Thunder Bay Hydro decided to take a 2008 study that it completed on Phantom Load and bring the results directly to their customers. After completion of the study, an application for a special project was submitted to the Ontario Power Authority to create the *Phantom Load Education Campaign*.

Free workshops were scheduled at local libraries and at over 55 centres with the message, "Cut Your Electricity Bill." The main thrust of the campaign was to educate homeowners to take responsibility and gain a better understanding of what was being plugged in at home. Attendees were encouraged to bring a recent Thunder Bay Hydro bill to the workshop for comparison purposes.

At the workshops, Thunder Bay Hydro staff outlined the history of electrical use at home and presented the results of the utility's 2008 Phantom Load study. They were also taught how to read and compare average kWh/day information on their bill to find out "what kind of mileage their houses were getting." The feedback from the workshops has been very encouraging. Interest has grown as more workshops have been held with attendance numbers ranging from 20 to 50 participants.

For marketing purposes, a catchy, lighthearted campaign has been undertaken - a ghostly mascot asks homeowners if they are being "haunted" by phantom load. Radio ads will feature eerie music which is intended to set the ads apart from standard conservation messages.

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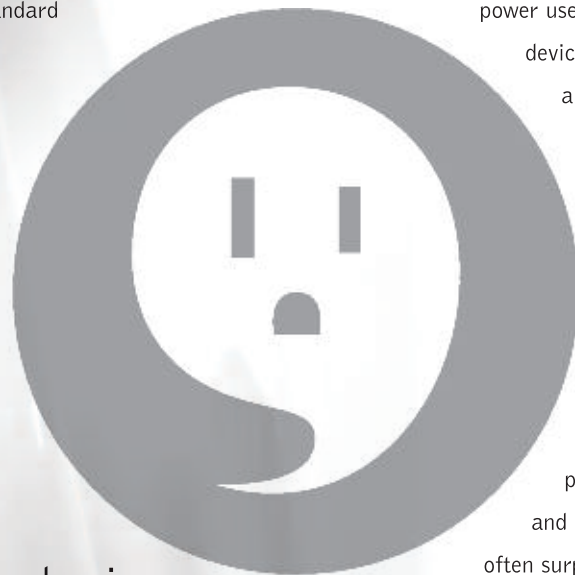
This fall, the campaign kicks off with a chance for customers to become test households for the utility. Ten families will be educated about Phantom Load and provided with a timed power bar to get them started on saving energy. One family will have a home energy audit done and others will be provided with extra devices to save energy. The selected families will be

interviewed to provide voice clips for radio ads that will be produced to publicize another series of free workshops in November.

By definition a phantom load is electric power used by electrical devices when they are in standby mode or switched off. Any device in the home can be a source of standby or phantom power and consumers are often surprised to hear

that something as simple as turning off the TV does not necessarily mean that the power flow has stopped.

Thunder Bay Hydro distributes electricity to over 49,000 customers within the city limits of Thunder Bay via a network of over 1,300 kilometers of overhead and underground power lines.



PHANTOM LOAD