

Caledon Citizen

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Guest Editorial

Dollars blowing in the wind

The 2006 Global Wind Energy Outlook report states that one third of the world's electricity can be supplied by wind, meaning that 113 billion tons of CO2 can be saved by 2050.

From just 4,800 MW in 1995, the world total has multiplied more than twelve-fold to reach over 59,000 MW at the end of 2005. The international market is expected to have an annual turnover in 2006 of more than 13 billion (Euros), with an estimated 150,000 people employed around the world.

Canada also had a record year, with the installed capacity more than doubling from 683 MW in 2005 to 1459 MW at the end of 2006. In 2006, Ontario became the second province in Canada, after Prince Edward Island, to enact a feed-in tariff. Public competitive bidding policies continued in Quebec where Hydro-Quebec had originally issued a second solicitation for 2000 MW of wind power in 2005, following the first solicitation for 1000 MW in 2004.

"Wind energy is an emerging Canadian success story and 2006 will be remembered as the year that our country first began to seriously capture its economic and environmental benefits," said Robert Hornung, President of the Canadian Wind Energy Association (CanWEA). "Canada is on the cusp of a wind energy boom as provincial governments are now targeting to have a minimum of 10,000 MW of installed wind energy capacity in place by 2015."

What does this really mean for Canada's small and medium-sized businesses?

First, using wind power energy can add a competitive edge to operations. One of the largest items in many businesses is the cost of acquiring electricity. Current wind turbine technology is fast developing more efficient means of acquiring the wind and turning it into useable power at a cheaper acquisition cost than fossil fuel based energy. This then means the electric bill will consequently be lower and growing lower as newer designs come onto the market.

In Ontario, the government is offering a premium price for buying renewable energy from private sources. As SMEs develop their own wind power generation, there exists the real possibility of not only eliminating the need to buy outside electricity but

also the real possibility of earning real dollars for selling back to the grid excess power not needed.

Even small properties can participate, as there are different sizes of turbines now available to take advantage of different needs. A property owner hosting a number of businesses in a building or the operator of an industrial park can significantly reduce electricity costs that can also act as inducements for new tenants to sign up for leases.

Moreover, governments at all levels are offering serious subsidies to encourage the conversion to renewable energy sources and to wean away from gas house causing energy sources.

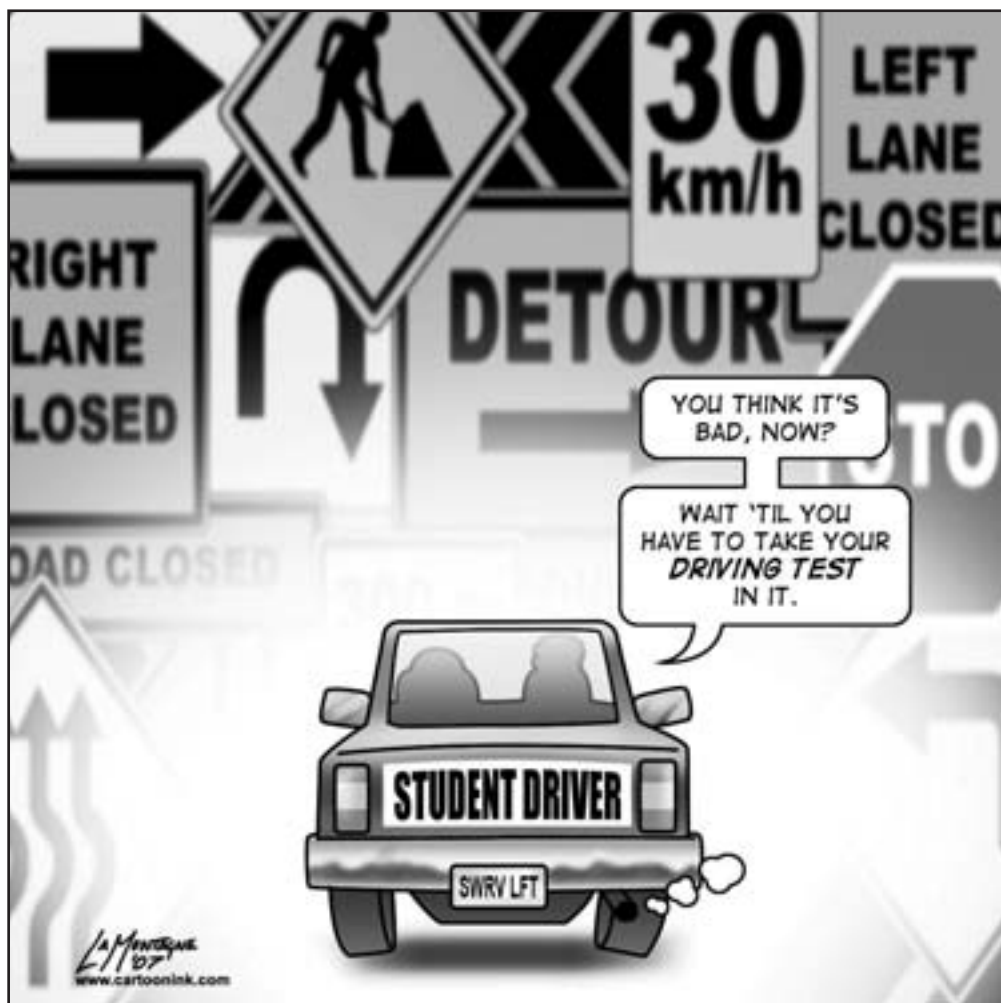
"Wind energy is the most attractive solution to the world's energy challenges. It is clean and fuel-free. Moreover, wind is indigenous and enough wind blows across the globe to cope with the ever-increasing electricity demand. Wind technology is not a dream for the future – it is real, it is mature and it can be deployed on a large scale," assures Arthouros Zervos, Global Wind Energy Council's chairman.

A private Toronto wind power development company states that that 10% to 20% of an average company's electrical usage could be generated through a wind farm park, further stating that the company is currently in development talks with over 40 companies across Canada, directly working with individual companies of all sizes to develop viable energy strategies.

Industry experts are claiming that over the next five years between 10,000 and 15,000 megawatts of wind energy installed in Canada.

So, if someone walked into your office offering a cheaper alternative to purchasing electricity with the real possibility of earning extra dollars on a system that would pay for itself within a short time period with the help of various governments, reduce operating costs and be counted as an environmental friendly business to boot, what would be your answer?

Submitted by **Mark Borkowski**, president of Toronto based **Mercantile Mergers & Acquisitions Corporation**, a mid-market mergers & acquisitions brokerage firm.



Our Readers Write

Rehabilitation too little, too late

I was very surprised when I saw the headline James Dick Construction Ltd. wins environmental award (Citizen, April 11) for rehabilitating one of its pits in Caledon. It is absolutely baffling to me as to why this action would require a headline. It is my understanding that the Aggregate Act **requires** rehabilitation of all aggregate operations.

The track record for rehabilitation by the majority of aggregate producers has been dismal, at best. For instance, in the year 2002 only 3% of disturbed land in pits and quarries

Government committed

Your editorial of May 9 (Why a quick commitment is needed on nuclear power) neglected to mention the real action that the McGuinty government has taken to ensure Ontario has the clean, sustainable and affordable electricity it needs. Since taking office, the McGuinty government has brought more than 3,000 megawatts of new generation online, and approximately 10,000 megawatts of new generation is in development.

Still, there is a lot more to be done, since between now and 2025, Ontario must address an electricity supply gap of 24,000 megawatts - equal to almost 80% of the generation we inherited when we came to government - if we are to ensure Ontario continues to grow and prosper.

So how have we got almost half-way there in only four years?

Ontario has brought nuclear generating facilities at Pickering back online.

We've arranged to have Bruce Power refurbish dormant units at its nuclear facilities.

We've taken Ontario from being a laggard to a North American leader in wind power.

We're digging a new tunnel at Niagara Falls to allow us to maximize power from that very valuable asset.

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in Ontario was rehabilitated, and that figure is not unusual. This does not conform to the licensing requirements as determined by the MNR, but since the ministry is understaffed and under-funded, there is little they can do to regulate the situation. Because of this appalling statistic, the surrounding communities must live with the consequences on a long-term basis. Have you ever taken a flight over Caledon and seen the devastation from the air wrought by the aggregate producers?

It is little wonder that we are taken aback when one of the aggregate companies has decided to implement rehabilitation. Why should they get a pat on the back for doing what they were supposed to do in the first place?

The other curious aspect to the article is that the award was presented by the industry to one of its own. Is it a coincidence that the chairman of the Aggregate Association who gave the award was none other than the son-in-law of James Dick and an employee of James Dick Construction Ltd? This seems to give the appearance of a photo-op and PR opportunity for James Dick Construction, rather than a credible recognition from an arm's length environmental organization such as The Nature Conservancy or World Wildlife.

No matter how much rehabilitation happens now, the record so far "is too little, too late." Wouldn't we all be very thirsty and very dirty if we had to wait for water (if that water was negatively affected by the blasting of a quarry or open pit mine) as long it took most aggregate companies to comply with the requirements of their licensed agreement?

Penny Richardson

President
The Coalition
of Concerned Citizens

Caledon Citizen



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