

NEWS RELEASE

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Power Workers' Union calls for investment in clean coal technologies; Polling shows Ontarians support keeping coal plants open

(Toronto) – The president of the Power Workers' Union (PWU) criticized the Ontario government for its plan to close Ontario's coal fuelled electricity generation plants in a speech to a network of energy professionals today in Toronto.

Mr. Don MacKinnon, President of the Power Workers' Union, outlined reasons why keeping coal plants open and installing clean coal technologies is in the best interest of Ontario residents and businesses.

Ontario could save \$11 billion over the next 20 years if Ontario upgrades existing coal-fuelled plants with clean coal technology instead of replacing them with natural gas, according to research submitted by PWU to the Ontario Power Authority earlier this year, commented Mr. MacKinnon.

"Polling by Innovative Research in October confirms that the vast majority of Ontarians agree with us: that the government at Queen's Park needs to rethink its current energy position," explained Mr. MacKinnon.

The survey, conducted by Innovative Research Group Inc. the week of October 13 to 20, showed that 88 percent of Ontarians believe the provincial government should rethink its energy plan. A further 59 percent of Ontarians are skeptical that the government has a plan to deal with Ontario's energy problems and 52 percent disagree that the province will have enough energy to provide for our future needs. The poll also suggested that there is widespread – 73 percent – support among Ontarians for keeping the coal plants open if the use of new clean-coal technology will reduce harmful emissions from the coal plants. Sixty-six percent of survey respondents indicated a preference for a diversified energy supply, using both natural gas and clean burning coal, and 91 percent would choose to install new clean burning technologies in Ontario's existing coal plants.

The poll was conducted among 600 adults, with a margin of error +/-4.00%, 19 times out of 20.

The Power Workers' Union believes that Ontarians require an energy supply that derives electricity from a number of sources, including clean coal, hydroelectric and nuclear, along with other economical renewable options. The PWU's better plan – (www.abetterplan.ca) – also includes a review of the province's natural gas strategy, investment in green power and the promotion of energy efficiency. This approach will guarantee the people of Ontario, and the businesses that operate here, an affordable, clean and secure supply of energy all year round.

The Power Workers' Union is the largest electricity union in Ontario, representing employees in electricity generation, transmission, distribution, regulations, and research and development.

Copies of the speech are available upon request.

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