

**NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

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**Power Workers' Union calls clean-coal electricity generation "Ontario's energy insurance policy"**

(Toronto) – The union representing workers in the electricity field is calling on Ontario's government to get on with the job of including coal-fuelled power plants in the province's future.

"We are encouraged by remarks made by Ontario Energy Minister Donna Cansfield recently, that this government might now be taking a more practical approach to coal-fuelled electricity generation. Outfitting our existing coal-fuelled stations with clean-coal technologies creates an energy insurance policy," remarks Power Workers' Union President Don MacKinnon. "Since closing the plants was 'more of a goal than a promise' – in the Minister's view – let's get practical and lay the ground work to ensure existing coal-fuelled facilities are set to meet the province's growing electricity needs and environmental responsibilities."

At a hearing today in Toronto, The PWU is calling on the government to direct:

- The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) and the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) to develop a workable contingency plan to ensure reliability and price protection for Ontario's citizens and businesses;
- Ontario Power Generation to start an Environmental Assessment process on new nuclear construction and clean-coal technology, and
- OPA to issue a Request for Proposal on clean-coal technology.

The government's own agencies – OPA and IESO – have in recent reports outlined the potential shortfalls in Ontario's energy supply if the government bars using existing coal facilities, observes Mr. MacKinnon.

"In participating in today's Open House and public consultation here in Toronto, we will be drawing attention to the OPA's *Supply Mix Advice* which shows the enormous potential gap between electricity supply and demand in the coming years," comments PWU President Don MacKinnon. "It's no surprise that eight weeks after the OPA's report was published the IESO recommended – in *The Ontario Reliability Outlook* – that coal-fuelled generation be retained to bridge this gap."

In December 2005, the OPA published its *Supply Mix Advice*. Earlier this month, Energy Minister Donna Cansfield announced the details of a 12-city public consultation process taking place this week responding to the report. The IESO tabled *The Ontario Reliability Outlook* on 2 February 2006.

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“By excluding coal generation, the OPA was given too narrow a mandate to do a thorough examination of how best to keep energy costs affordable for Ontario consumers and businesses,” remarks Mr. MacKinnon.

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 OPA earlier this year, concludes Mr. MacKinnon.

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](http://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.

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