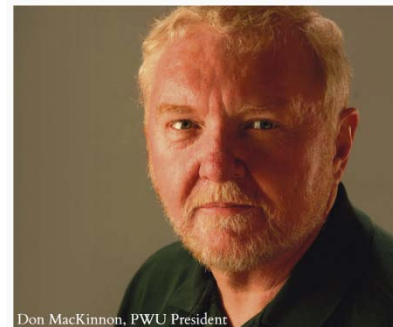


POWERWORKS

September 2014 **POWER WORKERS' UNION NEWSLETTER**

President's Message

September is once again upon us and we've come through an interesting summer. Following the June election of a Liberal majority government, Premier Wynne reappointed Energy Minister Bob Chiarelli. Minister Chiarelli was appointed in 2013 and to date has maintained an open dialogue with the PWU. In July, the Finance Minister reintroduced the budget that triggered the election in the first place.



Don MacKinnon, PWU President

On August 1, the provincial government released a report submitted to the government by Special Advisor, Jim Leech, regarding the sustainability of pension plans at Ontario Power Generation (OPG), Hydro One, the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) and the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). The government asked Mr. Leech, the former CEO of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, to recommend ways to improve the sustainability and affordability of the plans. During the course of his assessment, Mr. Leech consulted the PWU, the affected employers, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), the Society of Energy Professionals (Society) and government.

Mr. Leech makes a number of observations and recommendations regarding the affordability and sustainability of these pension plans for the long and short terms. The government will now review Mr. Leech's recommendations as will the affected employers and the PWU. Discussions will follow.

The report recommends that pension discussions between the parties be dealt with independently of normal bargaining but no further details have been forthcoming.

The release of the report was a small media sensation for a couple of weeks, which we refused to be drawn into. The security and sustainability of pension plans for our members has always been a top priority of the PWU and each of these pension plans is enshrined in the respective PWU collective agreement. Accordingly, any changes will require ratification

of the parties.

I will keep you informed as discussions take shape over the coming months.

Another file that we are paying close attention to is the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets. This body was appointed in April and is chaired by Ed Clark, Group President and CEO of TD Bank Group. Its stated mandate is to recommend ways to improve the efficiency and optimize the full value of Hydro One, OPG, and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) and to examine how to get the most out of these key government assets to generate better returns and revenues for Ontarians. The Council is expected to report back to the government by the end of 2014. The PWU met with Mr. Clark and Frances Lankin, a former NDP cabinet minister and member of the Council, on September 2. Those discussions were fairly general in nature and the Council representatives did not raise any specific proposals, initiatives or recommendations for comment. We made a number of comments regarding the positive contributions that both OPG and Hydro One can continue to make in providing a socio-economic engine for the province and we highlighted some of the financial and political risks associated with mishandling these valuable assets.

We requested the opportunity to make comment on any specific proposals or recommendations of the Council at the appropriate time and will keep you informed of developments.

All of the above will set some of the backdrop for our upcoming negotiations with OPG and Hydro One. Those collective agreements both expire on March 31, 2015.

The provincial government is continuing with its amalgamation of the IESO and the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) effective January 1, 2015. Both the PWU and the Society represent workers at the IESO while the Society recently organized all employees at the OPA. The Society has yet to finalize a collective agreement with the OPA. To complicate matters further, there are two very different pension plans at the companies. Discussions among the parties to develop a path forward have begun and we will report back as things begin to take shape.



September also brings the 68th annual Council of Chief Stewards, in effect the PWU's Parliament. October's newsletter will carry Council highlights.

In solidarity,
Don MacKinnon
PWU President

Hydro One Crews Volunteer to Repair Angus Tornado Damage

On Sunday June 21, about 30 PWU volunteers showed their commitment to a community in need. Four days before, a tornado with 180 k/h winds ripped through a sub-division in Angus, west of Barrie, tearing the roofs off about 45 homes. With heavy rain expected in the following days, Hydro One crews from Essa, Barrie, Stayner, Alliston, and Zone 2 Apprentices installed protective tarps on the damaged houses. The off-duty members used eight bucket trucks and were on site until late in the afternoon.



Chris Reynolds, a Union Trades Supervisor 3 with Barrie Lines, and his colleagues, approached Hydro One with the proposal. "I thought — we've got the rigging equipment to fly over top and drop tarps," he said. "The residents really wanted their possessions protected from the coming rain and I was sure we could do it."

He reported that the tornado damage in the affected sub-division was widespread and some homes would have to be torn down.

The reception from the local community was very warm. Essa Fire Chief Cynthia Ross Tustin told CTV News that "the hydro guys that live here saw a problem and they found a solution. They worked it up their chain and it's really been worked on by boots on the ground folks." According to Reynolds, "people told me that they were glad to see us arrive and one resident told me that 'you're heroes to us.'" The tarp installation couldn't have been timelier. Two days later, severe thunderstorms hit the area. Without the tarps, the rain would have completely destroyed people's belongings.

OPG Fined for Safety Violations at Atikokan G.S.



In late August, an Ontario court fined Ontario Power Generation (OPG) \$40,000 for failing to follow relevant safety regulations at the Atikokan Generating Station. OPG must also pay a further \$10,000 victim surcharge penalty for victims of crime. The incident

took place in November 2012 and involved low pressure turbine cross over piping gasket material. OPG acknowledged responsibility for failing to take the precaution of establishing, before the work started, that the gasket material did not contain a designated substance, in this case asbestos. A Ministry of Labour investigation concluded that it would have been a reasonable precaution to establish whether a designated substance was present before any scraping or grinding activities were performed to remove the gasket material. As part of the investigation into this event, the Ministry interviewed PWU Members, in the presence of PWU Health and Safety Staff, in late 2012 and early 2013.

Sector 2 Unit Amalgamations

Since Ontario Power Generation's Nanticoke and Lambton Thermal Generating Stations have ceased operations and been put in a mothballed state, PWU membership numbers at both stations have dropped dramatically. The ongoing membership complement at each station is anticipated to be less than 30 members, far below the target minimum of 100 members for operation of a PWU Unit.

Earlier this year, the PWU Provincial Sector Review Committee reviewed the effect of the closures on the organization of units within Sector 2 and made the following recommendation that was then approved by the PWU Executive Board.

Units 3 and 4 (Lambton), Units 5 and 6 (Nanticoke) were folded into Unit 10 (Hydro Thermal Engineering and Technical Services, Niagara Plant Group, Training and Development Department) on June 30, 2014.



Lambton Generating Station

Unit 2-10 is the closest Sector 2 Unit to the mothballed stations and currently has about 220 members. The Chief Steward there is Larry DeCorte. With the addition of some 50 members who will continue to work at Lambton and Nanticoke, Unit 10 membership will increase to approximately 270 members, which is not unusually large when compared to other units in the PWU.

The PWU has a proud history at both stations. The Union has had membership units at Lambton since 1969 and Nanticoke since 1973 ranging up to 800 members in total.



Nanticoke Generating Station

The two Chief Stewards at Lambton redeployed to other OPG sites. Ken Thompson (Unit 2-3), who had served for two and one half years, moved to the Lennox Generating Station and Al Brandon (Unit 2-4), who had served for eight and a half years was redeployed to the Beck Generating Station. One of the Nanticoke Chief Stewards, Paul Maher (Unit 2-5), who had served for a year and a half also moved to Beck. The other Nanticoke Chief Steward, Bruce Robinson (Unit 2-6) who had served for nine years - chose to retire. Thanks to all four for their contributions to the PWU especially during the difficult process of the closing the two coal generating stations.

Election Results for Sector Representatives on Executive Board

Three new Sector Representatives on the Executive Board who were elected at sector meetings in September. They are **Tim Borg** (Chief Steward for Unit 2-2, representing members working for Ontario Power Generation in the Thunder Bay area), **Derek Kavanagh** (Chief Steward for Unit 2-13 representing members working at New Horizon System Solutions), and **Steve Allan** (Chief Steward for Unit 6 - representing Hydro One members working at locations just east of Toronto).

The re-elected sector representatives are:

Sector 1: **Larry Alderdice, Andrew Clunis, Maureen Skopeleanos**

Sector 2: **Mike Quinn**

Sector 3: **Tom Chessell, Glenn Dawson**

PWU Members at the ESA Recognized for Saving Lives

During last January's ice storm, four PWU members working at the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) were instrumental in saving the lives of an elderly couple. A local utility



discovered that the couple was using a generator inside their residence. The utility contacted Harm Reduction Services at the ESA and Mail Room Clerk Erin Chandler (pictured to the left) immediately recognized the potential of carbon monoxide poisoning.



Erin telephoned Area Inspector Douglas Scott (pictured to the right) who confirmed her assessment and they agreed that Erin would call the local fire department. In the meantime, Customer Service Representative Dianna Thoms (pictured bottom left) got in touch with the utility, which said that there were some charges had to be paid before electrical service could be restored.



Dianna and Customer Service Representative Nicolle MacKenzie (pictured bottom right) reached out to the customer and helped expedite the reconnection process. When the fire department visited the residence, they found the carbon dioxide levels to be very high and credited the ESA staff members with saving the lives of two people.



The four individuals involved in this incident were awarded the ESA's Crystal Award in June at the Authority's annual Employee Recognition Banquet.

Brookfield Renewable Prince Wind Farm

In July, PWU Staff visited members at the 126-wind turbine Brookfield Renewable Prince Wind Farm. The wind farm is the third largest in Canada and sits on a ridge running northeast to southwest parallel to the shore of Lake Superior (from Whitefish Bay to Goulais River Flats). It has a capacity of 189 megawatts. Pictured below is PWU Health and Safety Officer, Dave Trumble, seated atop one of the turbines.

The technicians who maintain the turbines joined the PWU in late 2013. These new members have been working closely with PWU Health and Safety Staff to address a variety of musculoskeletal and ergonomic issues. The climb to the top of the nacelle (generator) is 80 metres. Even with some of the latest technology in climb assist devices, wind technicians are faced with the risk of strain injuries from climbing these huge structures as a routine part of their daily jobs.



Also in July, the members at Brookfield Power Wind Operations elected a new Principal Steward to replace Justin Rutherford who recently left the company. Congratulations to Mike McLean on his election as Principal Steward.

PWU Member Injured at Hydro One Transformer Station

On August 23, a PWU member performing maintenance work at a Hydro One transformer station on John Street in downtown Toronto was seriously injured after receiving an electrical shock. The member was initially rendered unconscious and suspended by his safety harness some 4.5 metres off the ground.



Toronto Fire Services assisted with the rescue. Paramedics transported the worker by ambulance to St. Michael's Hospital then transferred to the Ross Tilley Burn Centre at the Sunnybrook hospital with what was described as serious but non-life threatening injuries. Medical staff began localized skin grafting and amputated a finger. Sunnybrook has specialized expertise in dealing with electrical contact injuries.

The Ontario Ministry of Labour is investigating the cause of the accident and PWU representatives are taking an active role in those activities. The fact that the PWU member was wearing fire-retardant clothing helped prevent an even more serious injury.

Our thoughts are with our injured member, his family and co-workers.

Note: The PWU has been a key sponsor of the Ross Tilley Burn Unit at Sunnybrook hospital for many years.

2014 Labour Day Celebrations

For many in our society, Labour Day is simply the unofficial end to summer, the end of the vacation season - back to work and back to school - another much needed long weekend.



The origins of Labour Day in Canada can be traced back to December 1872 when a parade was staged on September 3 in support of the Toronto Typographical Union's strike

for a 58-hour work week.

In 1894, Canadian Prime Minister John Thompson and his government made Labour Day an official holiday to celebrate the achievements of workers. Since that time there have been countless societal advancements spearheaded by the Canadian Labour movement and countless counterattacks by those who would benefit from the exploitation of working people.

We celebrate our achievements throughout Ontario at events normally staged by local Labour Councils.

The PWU has a particularly large contingent of members and their families who participate in the parades in Toronto and Port Elgin, and as you can tell from the pictures, a great time was had by all.

Pictures from the Toronto Labour Day Parade





Pictures from the Port Elgin Labour Day Parade





Send Us Your Pics!

PWU Members perform an amazing range of jobs in many companies across Ontario. Help us show the range and breadth of the work of our members by sending us photos of your workplaces. We'll select some of the best ones to feature in future issues of PowerWorks and on the soon-to-be-relaunched PWU website.



Pictured to the left: A Hydro One Lines Crew based in Minden operating a Bombardier Muskeg Track Machine.

You can forward your pictures to the PWU Communications Department by email: comm@pwu.ca.

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