



Monday, April 18, 2011
Electricity Conservation & Efficiency (DSM) Plan 2012
Hearing before N.S. Utility and Review Board

Opening Remarks by Allan Crandlemire
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good morning Mr. Chair, Board Members.

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Efficiency Nova Scotia Corporation, thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning.

In a year filled with “firsts”, this is a big one for all of us at Efficiency Nova Scotia: presenting our first electricity conservation and efficiency plan before this Board.

It’s a bit like opening day for an expansion club in the major leagues. The good news is, unlike a lot of expansion clubs, we already have a great team at Efficiency Nova Scotia. A strong Board of Directors; staff with experience, leadership and enthusiasm; engaged stakeholders; a growing group of trade allies in communities across the province; and everyone with a genuine passion for building a culture of energy efficiency in Nova Scotia.

It’s also worth noting that our staff -- with a few notable, slightly grey exceptions -- is very young. In fact, the average age is just over 30. And I can tell you – having all those young, committed, bright people really fuels our corporation with another kind of renewable energy.

Another big strength for our team comes from the fact that we have inherited such a robust series of programs, previously led by Nova Scotia Power’s energy efficiency team. We are standing on the shoulders of the tremendous work they did from 2008 through 2010.

As interim administrator, they did a very good job -- for a much longer period than initially expected. The Nova Scotia Power team also worked hard with Efficiency Nova Scotia to ensure the seamless transition of responsibility for administering the programs. Allan Richardson and his team deserve considerable credit for helping Nova Scotians realize the value and benefits of energy efficiency.

I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge the contributions of a pioneer in the energy conservation and efficiency field, Blair Hamilton. Blair was a founder of Vermont's efficiency agency a generation ago. And through his tenacity and vision, he helped blaze the trail we – and many other jurisdictions -- are now following, as an independent corporation in charge of energy efficiency. Blair passed away earlier this month after battling health challenges for 20 years.

Blair provided tremendous guidance and counsel to us this past summer as we were setting up Efficiency Nova Scotia. He also contributed to the programs we'll be discussing at this hearing. He contributed in stakeholder sessions, in the Program Development Working Group, and whenever you needed to chat with him on the other end of the phone – either in Vermont or at one of the conferences where he always seemed to be a speaker. I last spoke with Blair five weeks ago about our 2012 Plan and he was as engaged as ever.

It's reassuring for those of us who knew Blair Hamilton and for those who may have just heard of him, that you'll see his fingerprints all over this Demand Side Management plan for 2012. It's nice to know that Blair's influence will continue to live on in Nova Scotia for many years to come.

Efficiency Nova Scotia's 2012 Plan builds on the strengths and experience of proven, existing programming, while incorporating a wide variety of input from stakeholders. Throughout the creation of this plan, our stakeholders have been instrumental to its success. They have contributed with their specific knowledge, while always keeping an eye on our shared goal of an energy efficient Nova Scotia.

We are a small province doing big things in energy efficiency.

This process has been a positive, collaborative effort. And that translates into a plan that brings together programs for all sectors and walks of life.

In developing this plan, we have given extensive consideration to the level of program savings for electricity. It is faithful to the goals set out in the province's Integrated Resource Plan – exceeding the electricity savings target -- and strikes the right balance for Nova Scotians.

Here are some of the highlights of the 2012 Plan:

Nova Scotians are forecast to save enough electricity in 2012 to power an additional 26,000 average households. (In a province with about 400,000 households, that is a significant goal).

Nova Scotians are set to achieve some of the most ambitious electricity savings in North America: 234-million kiloWatt hours. Higher than the IRP target of 205-million. And up from the already-ambitious goal of 158-million kiloWatt hours for 2011.

The program budget for 2012 is \$43.7-million – up slightly from this year’s \$41.9-million budget. And considerably less than the \$61-million forecast in the IRP.

There is a focus on reaching low-income Nova Scotians, including renters, with no-charge efficiency programs. And there is a broad suite of programs to help households, businesses, charities and institutional customers save electricity and save money.

The plan also shows the positive contribution to electricity efficiency targets from the province’s biggest industrial customers -- and from new building codes and standards.

Both contributions are prime examples of how energy efficiency is being embraced – and moving to the mainstream, becoming part of our daily lives and how we behave as a society. That evolution is just the way it should be – we will never be energy efficiency leaders in Nova Scotia if we only rely on the savings that come from our programs.

As Nova Scotians, we are facing a challenge that isn’t going away: higher energy prices. At the same time, Nova Scotia is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of fossil fuels like coal – the biggest source of our electricity.

That challenge we share is significant. The good news is we also share a big part of the solution: energy efficiency. People need to understand the value of investing in efficiency -- and the cost of doing nothing.

There is still much to be done. But more and more Nova Scotians do understand that value. They understand that value when they decide to buy an Energy Star fridge or install CFLs or use power bars around the house. They understand that it’s valuable today, and even more so in a year -- or five years from now. The more energy prices continue to rise, the more significant your savings become – year after year.

The daily postings on gas station billboards of \$1.33 per litre should remind all of us about the need to embrace energy efficiency. Nova Scotians know why they should drive fuel-efficient vehicles. Now they are understanding the value of fuel-efficient homes and businesses.

I’ll give you a couple of examples of Nova Scotians who understand the value – and have taken part in our efficiency programs.

A few weeks ago, I was in Cape Breton and visited one of our customers, Jamie Whyte, the owner of Harbax Home Hardware in Glace Bay. Jamie renovated and expanded his entire store and while he was doing that, he took part in Efficiency Nova Scotia’s Small Business Lighting Solutions program, changing out every light in the space. The renovations are done, the space looks great, and more customers are coming.

And the store will save about 100,000 kWh – more than \$10-thousand *every year* on its power bill.

To use Jamie Whyte's words: "When I heard about the program, it just seemed too good to be true. And we're saving so much on our electricity bill that our investment will be paid off in six months."

Another customer. The Scotsburn Dairy Ice Cream Factory in Truro. The plant, which runs almost 24-7, has worked with Efficiency Nova Scotia to replace all of its old lights with energy efficient ones. Total energy savings? About 400,000 kWh – more than \$40-thousand in savings *every year*.

As branch manager Mathieu Levesque told me: "Wow! Why didn't we do this a couple of years ago?"

Music to my ears.

So whether it's Jamie in Glace Bay or Mathieu in Truro or a homeowner in Yarmouth, that's the experience we try to deliver to all Nova Scotians. That sort of positive experience is infectious; it builds trust, understanding, and support about the real and lasting value of energy efficiency.

Efficiency Nova Scotia is working hard to spread the word, through grassroots networking, building relationships with stakeholders and trade allies, home shows and speaking opportunities, old fashioned shoe leather, new media, the web, and strategic marketing. We want to be accessible, to be part of the daily conversation in Nova Scotia.

Take our system of customer phone service. When you dial 1-877-999-6035, you won't have to push another series of buttons to try to reach a human being. If you call that number, you're going to speak with Natasha, Randy or Liam. They are the frontline for the Efficiency Nova Scotia team – and they're getting great results.

When they started in February, the first couple of weeks were fairly quiet. By the end of March they hit a milestone of 1,000 customer conversations or emails. And since April 1st, when we became the one-stop shop for electricity efficiency programs *and* other fuels, things have gotten even busier.

So, Nova Scotians are getting to know us. And we're getting to know about their success stories. Making the choice to invest in energy efficiency, to save now and even more as energy prices rise. All the while reducing the impact on the environment and preventing the need for a costly new power plant.

At Efficiency Nova Scotia, we've been going full-speed since December and now have a staff of about 45 going flat-out to deliver energy savings programs for all Nova Scotians. It's an exciting place to work – a place where the work we do really makes a difference for the people, the economy, the environment, and the future of Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotians have decided that their future must be sustainable. It's encouraging to see the development of greener technologies and renewable energy, wind and solar, hydro and even in-stream tidal, in the years to come.

At the risk of sounding like a proud parent, let's not forget that we already have the cheapest, greenest form of energy at our fingertips – *energy efficiency*. Think of those kiloWatt hours that are never used, that no one has to buy; the piles of coal that aren't burned in the power plant, the avoided greenhouse gas emissions, and the avoided electrical load that doesn't add to the strain on the power grid.

Nova Scotians want to know their money is an investment, being spent wisely. If we are going to ask for their support and ask them to embrace energy efficiency, we should have a compelling case to make. We're confident we do.

We think this plan for 2012 is moving Nova Scotia towards the front of the line of energy efficiency leaders. We believe in the foundations of this plan and its programs and goals for Nova Scotians. Its energy savings exceed the target set out in the IRP, while striking the right balance in setting Nova Scotians' financial contribution.

We look forward to the discussion with you the Board, consultants, and our stakeholders who have helped shape this plan.

Thank you.