



Tuesday, May 29, 2012

Electricity Conservation & Efficiency (DSM) Plan 2013-15

Hearing Before N.S. Utility and Review Board

**Opening Remarks by Allan Crandlemire
CEO, Efficiency Nova Scotia Corporation**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, Board members, stakeholders.

It's a pleasure to speak today on behalf of the Efficiency Nova Scotia team. The team here with me. The team at our office in Burnside.

And our community-based team -- the people helping Nova Scotians become more energy efficient, doing great work in homes, apartments, small businesses and larger employers across the province.

And it's another kind of teamwork that has brought us here today, with an agreement on our multi-year DSM Plan.

This is the teamwork with our stakeholders.

We try hard to build strong relationships with all of our stakeholders, from the formal intervenors who take part in the regulatory process and regular meetings to the many Nova Scotians who call us with questions.

Efficiency Nova Scotia can only succeed if we have the respect, criticism, and support of ratepayers, stakeholders, and customers.

This agreement is an encouraging sign for Nova Scotians.

To have real consensus like this.

To have the support from all the ratepayer groups -- from the consumer advocate to the small business advocate to the big industrial players.

It's a real vote of confidence that energy efficiency works, that it's a good investment for Nova Scotians, and that it's possible to work openly and constructively with stakeholders to find common ground.

The certainty of multi-year efficiency programs is good news for Nova Scotians and good news for the companies who make a living in the energy efficiency business.

So they can plan their business, continue to develop their skills and capacity, and deliver better service to customers.

No question, there is rising frustration over the rising cost of energy. People want to fight back.

Efficiency Nova Scotia is your best way to fight back.

We live in a world where we know that energy prices are only going up, with no magical solutions in the wings.

So, with energy prices going *up*, there are only two logical responses:

Number one, use energy better. And save that money for something else.

Number two, slow down the increase in price by reducing the demand.

We can help Nova Scotians do both.

As a corporation, we're about a year and a half old now. Still young in our evolution, youthful and driven in our business, yet more and more seasoned in terms of working with customers to deliver personalized, effective energy solutions.

In 2011, Nova Scotians implemented energy efficiency measures that will save them about \$100-million in future electricity costs.

They collectively saved 141.8-million kilowatt hours in electricity.

More than a 70 percent jump from the year before.

Enough electricity to take 14,000 average homes off the grid.

So, how did all that happen?

Much of the credit has to go to the foresight and good will of Nova Scotians, looking to fight back against rising energy costs.

Last year, some 6,000 smaller businesses and 150 large employers took the steps to increase their efficiency and competitiveness and save money at the same time.

On the residential side, we made great strides in reaching low-income Nova Scotians – some 10,000 people – creating energy savings in their homes now and on every power bill they will ever get.

And we were also able to reach many more renters in the province, a group that had been challenging to reach according to other efficiency organizations.

A successful pilot project in two First Nations communities reached 170 homes and is being expanded to more First Nations communities this year.

Two other pilot projects took on efficiency from very different angles; yet both created enormously positive results.

Our demonstration homes project, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Homebuilders' Association, produced the two most energy efficient houses ever built in the province – with EnerGuide Ratings in the mid-90s. And both were recognized recently with national awards for energy efficiency.

The Green Schools pilot, in partnership with Clean Nova Scotia, engaged students, teachers and staff to learn more about making their school more energy efficient – and took action to make that happen while engaging their peers at the same time. Today, 27 schools are part of the program, up from 16 last fall.

For Efficiency Nova Scotia, obviously saving kilowatt hours matters. The right programming matters. Prudent spending matters.

Our proposed plan builds on the successes and experience of the past, while trying some new approaches as well.

Our plan has a more customer-focused approach, offering personalized energy solutions, rather than expecting customers to be familiar with a variety of program offerings.

Another central piece of our evolution is the shift to a multi-year plan.

An approach used in other leading jurisdictions, too.

It comes down to better planning, predictability, and also having the ability to be nimble enough to react to changes in the marketplace.

We can better serve our customers and trade allies, we are in a better position to sign longer term contracts, offer more attractive financing options.

The regulatory oversight will remain as strong and productive as ever.

We will continue meeting regularly with the Board as well as stakeholders, providing regular, detailed reports, and responding to any concerns.

The strength and productivity of our relationships with stakeholders is crucial.

So too is building our relationships with our customers.

To borrow the flavour of an old beer ad, those who know us, seem to like us a lot.

Corporate Research Associates recently surveyed more than 800 of our customers – businesses and residential.

The survey found that about 97 percent would recommend us to others -- and would like to take part in other efficiency programs.

Now, 97 percent is not quite perfect, but it sure is gratifying.

We are very encouraged and proud of the work we have done – so far.

We need energy efficiency to become the new normal in building and improving homes, apartments, commercial and industrial construction.

We need to get the message out to more Nova Scotians to take part.

We can't lower power rates. But more importantly we can help lower power bills.

Rising power rates should remind us not of the cost of energy efficiency, but of its value, compared to the cost of doing nothing.

Energy efficiency is all about getting *more* for less – *more* savings on power bills, *more* money in Nova Scotians' pocketbooks, *more* competitive businesses, *more* investment in Nova Scotians.

And all because we are using energy better– making the savings work for Nova Scotians.

Thank you.