



MEDIA RELEASE

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Ecology Action Centre Supports Government Consultation on Energy Efficiency Administration

Halifax – Today the Ecology Action Centre welcomed a government initiative to consider how to best establish a framework for energy efficiency delivery in Nova Scotia.

“Nova Scotia has an opportunity to establish a best-practice framework for energy efficiency delivery by learning from other jurisdictions. We need to ensure a great deal of public accountability to make sure energy efficiency investments are effective and equitable,” said EAC Energy Coordinator, Brendan Haley.

Recent studies of Nova Scotia’s electricity system have shown that energy efficiency is a very cost-effective option. Nova Scotia Power’s *Integrated Resource Plan* establishes holding electricity growth in the province flat through investments in energy efficiency as the cheapest path forward.

The EAC says the major issue is ensuring that the energy saving goals are actually achieved, for electricity as well as other forms of energy such as heating fuel.

“Choosing the right form of administration and establishing clear performance targets for energy savings, with consequences for not meeting these targets ensures accountability for the public and helps deliver the results we want,” said Brendan Haley.

Many stakeholders have expressed concern with Nova Scotia Power having control over electric energy efficiency programs, which currently seems to be the only option available under the Utility Board’s authority. These concerns relate to potential conflicts of interest within the utility and a lack of coordination between electricity and other fuel efficiency program strategies. Due to similar concerns, jurisdictions such as Vermont, Oregon and New Jersey have created independent energy efficiency deliver agents.

While the EAC welcomes a full discussion on what the best model is for Nova Scotia, they are also highlighting the need to ramp-up energy efficiency investments sooner rather than later. The EAC notes that Nova Scotia Power’s long-term plan suggests that a new coal fired power plant could be proposed by the utility if energy efficiency savings do not start to accumulate in 2008.

“The choice is between clean and cheap efficiency today, or dirty and more expensive fossil fuels tomorrow. The path to choose is clear. We have to get going as soon as possible with effective programs to tap into the large potential for energy savings,” said Brendan Haley.

The EAC is supporting the development of an initial set of energy efficiency programs in 2008 and urging all stakeholders and government to work swiftly.

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