

Wayne Emmerson
Chairman and CEO



The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1
Tel: 905-895-1231
email: wayne.emmerson@york.ca

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Hon. Todd Smith
Minister of Energy
77 Grenville Street, 10th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2C1

Dear Minister:

RE: York Region's Response to Ontario's Plans for Increased Reliance on Natural Gas Electricity Generation

York Region reports progress towards its commitments to greenhouse gas emission and energy conservation goals annually, as established in the Region's [Energy Conservation Demand Management Plan](#) required by the [Electricity Act Regulation 507/18](#).

In the [2020 Corporate Energy Report](#) to York Regional Council, staff raised concern about impacts associated with rising emission factors due to increased reliance on natural gas electricity generators.

To date, neither Canada nor Ontario is on track to meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets based on the Paris Accord. In 2019, the Auditor General of Ontario reported meeting the province's own targets will require aggressive measures to reduce emissions by up to 14 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

York Region calls on the Province to ensure long-term energy planning supports municipal efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Municipalities have a legislated requirement to develop Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plans, including strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Switching to low emission electricity is among key strategies pursued by many Ontario municipalities including York Region. Decisions that increase grid-supplied electricity emissions undermine investments by municipal governments to meeting these objectives. Provincial and municipal long-term energy planning goals should be aligned to ensure effective integration.

York Region requests Ontario government ensure zero-emitting sources of generation are prioritized for electricity supply

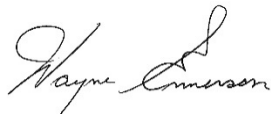
There are financially viable, zero-emission options available to reliably address the closure of the Pickering Nuclear Station and maintenance requirements at other sites. The most notable options are upgrades to interconnection capacity with Quebec's hydro-generated electricity grid, conservation and renewable energy generation. Choosing to quintuple natural gas electricity emissions by 2040 as indicated by the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) should be the last option.

Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) and generators require clear provincial policy direction to give preference to low emission sources

In a recent public engagement entitled "Gas Phase-out Impact Assessment", IESO confirmed that policy direction from the Ontario government is required to give preference to low-emission sources of electricity.

Many large organizations and communities in Ontario are working to reduce their emissions and meet emission targets under the Paris Accord, but are unable to plan effectively without dependable emission intensities for future electricity generation. The province should give preference to zero-emission sources to sustain Ontario's leadership role in a low emission electricity grid.

Sincerely,



Wayne Emmerson
York Region Chairman and CEO

Copy to: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Local MPs
Local MPPs
Lesley Gallinger, IESO President and CEO
Jeff Lehman, AMO Energy Task Force
Jack Gibbons, Clean Air Alliance

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