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Hicks on Six

Thu, October 11, 2007



Deregulation trashes conservation

By GRAHAM HICKS

E-MAIL TO A FRIEND PRINT PAGE WRITE US LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DUMB BUT FUNNY

"Daddy, Daddy, can I have another glass of water, please?"

"But I've given you 10 glasses of water already!"

"Yes, but the bedroom is still on fire!"

STEVE WEST'S LEGACY

Retiring councillor Michael Phair has been following the Hicks on Six series on the mess that add-on fees have made of deregulated residential electricity rates.

"I remember when (then minister responsible for de-regulation) Steve West met with council - as the owners of EPCOR - to explain deregulation," says Michael.

"(Then mayor) Bill Smith asked, 'Will it lead to cheaper electricity bills for Edmontonians?'

"West went around in circles.

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"Bill asked again, 'Will it lead to cheaper electricity bills?'

"Again, West hemmed and hawed.

"Finally Bill said, 'Steve, please answer my question. Will it lead to cheaper bills?'

"West was quiet for a few seconds, then he said, "People are going to make a lot of money."

WHAT'S THE POINT OF CONSERVATION?

An observation made by several writers about our power bills.

"The extra fees are set whether you use one kilowatt hour or 1,000 kilowatt hours," writes Don Sieffert.

"So what's my incentive to reduce or use less electricity when it is such a small part of my bill?"

Writes Angela Watt: "Our family has done everything in our power (pardon the pun) to be diligent in our use of resources, be it power, water or gas. We have upgraded our home with energy efficient windows, high efficiency bulbs, a high efficiency furnace and a new hot water tank.

"The result? We still have high bills. Not because of usage (which is actually down) but because of all those fees.

"What's the point of trying to teach our children to conserve," writes another reader. "When it only means a buck or two off a \$100 bill?"

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to your local MLA and to Premier Ed Stelmach (his constituency office e-mail is: fortsaskatchewan.vegreville@assembly.ab.ca) telling them what a disaster deregulation and "add-ons" have been for you. Ask that the residential power system be reregulated to be fair to all.

Easiest way to reach an MLA is to Google up "Legislative Assembly of Alberta," find your guy or gal and fire off an e-mail.

Believe me, they count the e-mails.

Ed knows that with the energy royalty review report, people are beginning to believe Big Oil has this government in its pocket.

Last thing Ed wants is more of the same - Big Electricity seen to be hosing the average Albertan, while his government looks the other way.

If those perceptions stick, he knows what will happen.

Bye, bye, Conservatives. Hello, Liberals.

