

Ontario government's costly nuclear program needs audit, say Ontario Environmental Groups

Ontario families are facing decades of high electricity bills and higher taxes because of expensive nuclear reactors.

In a letter to the Ontario Auditor General, more than a dozen environmental groups have asked for a Value-for-Money review of Ontario's nuclear program.

The Auditor General Act notes that the Office of the Auditor General can report on government programs where it has been found that money was spent "without due regard for economy and efficiency."

The Ontario government's decision to privilege nuclear power doesn't make economic sense compared to much cheaper renewable energy options.

"When you add it all up - the rebuilding of old nuclear reactors, the construction of very expensive small modular reactors, and the high costs of new large-scale reactors, the energy bill comes in at a staggering \$298 billion to \$429 billion" says David Robertson of SCAN! "That money is being committed without due regard for economy and efficiency. It's a risky gamble."

A background brief to the request highlights some concerns:

- In November 2025, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) applied a 29% increase in electricity costs for residential customers. The increase resulted, in large part, from the increasing costs of nuclear electricity.
- In December 2025, the Ontario government introduced a new regulation (O.reg 53/05) which requires Ontario electricity consumers to pay the high costs of interest payments prior to nuclear reactors being placed in service. On the heels of that change, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) requested a 72.5% increase in the price it charges for nuclear electricity. The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will determine the actual increase.
- Bill 40, the Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025 gives priority to nuclear-generated electricity even though it is now more expensive than the renewable options of wind, solar, and storage.
- Although the government claimed that the Darlington refurbishment came in "on time and on budget", OPG quickly informed the OEB that it needed to spend \$2 billion more on immediate 'post refurbishment' projects.

- When OPG announced the building of 4 Small Modular Reactors at Darlington, the government claimed that Ontario was leading the pack. Now, as other provinces and the federal government have abandoned their SMR projects, it seems Ontario is left holding the bag with an expensive and difficult-to-commercialize technology.
- The Pickering refurbishment is projected to cost \$26.8 billion. If all goes well, the project will be finished in 2034. OPG has claimed that the costs will be about \$180 MWh or about 18 cents per kilowatt hour. But the Independent Electricity Systems Operator (IESO) has recently secured contracts with wind and solar producers to purchase electricity at 8.8 cents per kilowatt. Electricity from renewable energy sources will be in our homes years before Pickering is back online and at less than half the cost.
- The government claims Wesleyville will be the largest nuclear facility in the world. It will also be the most expensive. While OPG has not provided any financial estimates, the costs will likely range from \$151-239 billion. Ontario consumers will be paying for that electricity for the next 70 to 100 years, at a time when the rest of the world is rapidly shifting to cheaper, safer, and cleaner renewable energy options. The Wesleyville New Nuclear Project represents a huge expense and a high risk of stranded assets.

The costs of Ontario's nuclear expansion are being incurred without adequate public consultation, without independent fiduciary oversight, and without consideration of cheaper and safer renewable alternatives.

For More Information:

David Robertson
 Chair, Ontario Project Working Group
 Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!)
dwsr@rogers.com
 (416) 219-5257

Blue Dot Northumberland
 CALL (Climate Action for Lifelong Learners)
 Change Course
 Climate Fast
 Environment Haliburton
 For Our Grandchildren
 GASP (Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet)
 North Watch
 OCEC (Ontario Climate Emergency Campaign)
 OCAA (Ontario Clean Air Alliance)
 Port Hope Community Health Concerns
 SCAN! (Seniors for Climate Action Now!)

TERRE (Toronto East Residents for Renewable Energy)

350 Hamilton

350 Kingston

350 Toronto