



# FORTY YEARS OF CLEAN ENERGY AT ARNPRIOR GS

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Relatively speaking, Arnprior Generating Station is still a spring chicken in the hydroelectric world.

Compared to some of the other stations on the Madawaska River, like Calabogie GS (1917), Barrett Chute GS (1942), and Stewartville GS (1948), Arnprior is sitting pretty at just 40 years of age. Indeed, it is the youngest OPG-owned facility in Eastern Ontario.

The two-unit, 82 megawatt hydroelectric station situated 64 kilometres west of Ottawa first went into service in October 1976. OPG's predecessor, Ontario Hydro, began building Arnprior in 1972 with the purpose of correcting bank erosion, water level fluctuations and other environmental problems along the lower Madawaska caused by the operation of hydroelectric plants, like Stewartville GS, further upstream.

As the last hydro station to be constructed on the Madawaska, and the last to be built under Ontario Hydro, Arnprior has a distinctly unique look compared to some of the province's older hydro sites.

"It's an architectural standout," says Jennifer Gardiner, Corporate Relations Officer at OPG. Most of Ontario's hydroelectric plants had already been constructed by the 1960s and they all shared a similar appearance, she said.

"This was the only one of its type that was built," said Janet Carlile, Curator at the Arnprior and District Museum. "It certainly has a different look to it. It's not as intimidating as some of the other larger stations like Stewartville, which is absolutely huge."

Another prominent feature of this site is the picturesque Arnprior Weir, an artificial waterfall that is located about a kilometre north from the station. The curved barrier, along with the man-made Lake Madawaska headpond, was built in conjunction with the plant itself to help control water levels between the Madawaska and Ottawa rivers. However, as pretty as it looks, the weir can be dangerous as water levels in the pond can rise at any time.

Today, the generating station produces enough clean, renewable energy to power 82,000 homes. It also continues to be an important landmark in the town of Arnprior, which has a population of just over 8,000. Situated near Highway 417, it is visible to drivers travelling to and from Ottawa.

"It is hugely important to Arnprior," Carlile said. Many from the town have worked at the hydro station, she said. And back in the '70s, the station helped to provide Arnprior with financial resources to support numerous projects in the town's downtown core.

"It provided Arnprior with funding that it otherwise wouldn't have been able to secure," she said.



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