

**Tom Mitchell
President and CEO
Ontario Power Generation
Ontario Energy Network Lunch
May 6, 2015**

NOTES FOR REMARKS – CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Introduction

Good afternoon.

My sincere thanks to Chief Hardisty for that kind introduction and for travelling such a long way to be here.

I'm truly honoured. Miigwetch.

I would also like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the many people I have worked with from Ontario's Ministry of Energy.

The Ministry staff is very dedicated to serving Ontarians on a complex and important file.

So thank you to Deputy Minister Serge Imbrogno and your team.

In my view they represent the best the Ontario Public Service delivers.

I would like to thank two current cabinet members with whom I worked: Brad Duguid, who, as Energy Minister, was instrumental to initiating the Lower Mattagami Project.

And the current Minister, Bob Chiarelli, who has been very supportive of OPG.

I'm honoured MPP Bob Delaney is here representing the Minister.

I also want to acknowledge and thank everyone here for their kind wishes.

But I'm still *very much* on the job and will be until we've transitioned my successor.

It was six years ago this month that I took over as CEO and President of Ontario Power Generation.

That may not sound like a long time...

But when you work in the energy sector, it's kind of like dog years.

Or at least it sometimes felt that way.

It certainly was never dull.

And some days were harder than others.

But I believe it's a *privilege* to work in this sector.

And a *distinct* privilege to do so at OPG.

Since this is likely my last chance to address an OEN luncheon, I want to use the opportunity to talk about the people of OPG.

Partly because when I look back at my 13 years with the company, it's the people I'll remember the most.

I also feel it's important to salute the often overlooked work and achievements of our employees.

Rich Legacy of Serving Ontario

With over 100 years of history, and staff and plants from Kenora to Cornwall, OPG plays a unique role in this province.

Because this company -- and the people and companies that preceded us -- helped build Ontario.

And -- more than any other generator -- our people still serve the needs of their communities.

This legacy is impressive, if not unparalleled...

- The construction of Beck 1
- The contribution Hydro employees made during the World Wars
- The great post war hydroelectric power plant expansion of the 1950s – including the lives lost in building these plants
- The relief efforts they led following Hurricane Hazel
- The St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project, and last but not least...
- The creation of Canada's nuclear industry.

These and so many others are spectacular achievements – worthy of a great province and a great country.

They need to be kept before the public eye.

Because they are significant...

They make people feel proud and they make our employees feel proud.

And they speak to a desire to be part of something big and important.

Something that matters.

Something that makes a difference.

Our people understand the things they do and build today will impact generations to come.

Just as what our predecessors built still impact us today.

Coal Closure and Transformation

I was reminded of this during an event to celebrate the repowering of Atikokan G.S.

This biomass initiative, which started as an idea some OPG people had, has now spurred a new industry in Ontario's Northwest.

Biomass, by the way, will play an important peaking role in our balanced mix but it's not a replacement for base load.

It did however save jobs and bring hope to the citizens of Atikokan.

And along with the recent conversion of Thunder Bay G.S. to advanced biomass, it's helping fight climate change.

In fact, phasing out our coal generation was North America's single largest climate change initiative.

It also means OPG is now Ontario's largest clean energy generator....

99.7 per cent of our power is free of smog and greenhouse gas emissions. (I'll keep looking for that last .3 per cent.)

I'm proud of this achievement.

I'm even more proud of the men and women who made it happen because it was a very difficult transition.

Another company's ads might suggest they're somehow responsible for closing coal in Ontario.

But our people did all the heavy lifting.

There were 980 employees at Lambton and Nanticoke who ran those plants safely and reliably for over 40 years.

They, along with the Thunder Bay and Atikokan teams deserve our thanks.

They converted or preserved these valuable generating assets.

They uprooted their families for jobs hundreds of miles away.

And they delivered the Province's clean air commitment.

The end of coal also meant our generating portfolio shrunk.

We had a lot of churn and uncertainty in the company.

But we kept a clear focus.

We knew we wanted to maintain our role as the price moderator.

And we have.

Last year, OPG's average price was 47.7 per cent lower than that of other generating companies.

It's a regulated price that we defend before intervenors and the public.

And we're happy to do so.

You know in 2010, I spoke at the APPrO conference about the need to better connect with ratepayers.

And how the entire electricity sector could do this by adopting a stronger focus on value and transparency.

Electricity prices do matter.

It's still a relevant message today.

The commitment to being a transparent, low-cost generator remains an important distinction for our employees.

They understand the role we play in powering homes, industry and small businesses.

This commitment was the impetus behind the company-wide business transformation we launched four years ago.

This initiative has been tough sloggging, but effective.

Through efficiencies, reorganization and attrition, we are on track to save over \$1 billion between 2011 and 2016.

This was possible because our people have embraced a culture of efficiency with a constant eye on the bottom line.

We received hundreds of employee submissions with ideas and suggestions for saving more money.

Yet even in the midst of change and transformation and attrition, they consistently performed safely and to the highest international standards.

In fact last year OPG achieved the best workplace safety record in our company's history.

Resilience Leads to Success

Over its eleven plus years, OPG has undergone significant change.

Many would say *change* has been the one constant.

But I believe the resilience of our people has been the one true constant.

Eleven years ago, OPG was a company in turmoil.

But we persevered and started to rebuild.

Together we achieved significant performance improvements.

Safety and environmental benchmarks were met and surpassed.....

We transformed Darlington into a global industry leader.

Communities near our facilities began feeling confident and engaged in our operations.

We maintained their trust, along with the regulator's trust, after the nuclear accident in Japan.

Relations with First Nations and Métis groups saw a painful history give way to groundbreaking hydroelectric development partnerships.

Like the \$2.6-billion Lower Mattagami project in partnership with Chief Hardisty's Moose Cree First Nation.

Directly employing 250 First Nation and Métis workers at its peak, it was the largest hydroelectric project the north has seen in over 40 years.

And it was finished ahead of schedule and on budget.

Thank you again to Chief Hardisty – it was a real pleasure to work with you.

I can tell you this impressive clean energy project would not have happened were it not for the down-right dogged commitment of some OPG employees who believed in this partnership, and that treating First Nations with respect and fairness was the right thing to do.

Now...OPG is in "all-hands-on-deck" mode to deliver the Darlington Refurbishment on schedule and on budget.

The refurbishment will provide huge economic benefits to Ontario along with decades of clean, affordable power.

I have to admit I'm a little envious I won't be around to see the refurbishment work in full flight.

The recently completed Darlington Energy Complex, with its full scale training mock-up of a reactor face, is really an *engineer's paradise*.

We were so pleased to have Minister Chiarelli and Board Chair Bernard Lord on hand for the official opening this past fall.

It's an amazing place and I would encourage all of you to visit the facility during our next round of open houses on June 6 and 7.

You can even take a selfie with the reactor face mock-up.

Now I've never taken a selfie but if I did, it would be with that lovely reactor face.

So while I will have some mixed emotions about not being around, I am very confident the Darlington Refurbishment will be a success.

Because the Darlington station is such a fine performing asset.

Because we already have six years of detailed planning and preparation under our belts.

And because the best people in the business are on the job.

Closing

So my message today is pretty simple.

People matter.

People make the difference.

It's my hope the women and men of OPG never forget the role they have – and continue – to play in Ontario's ever-changing energy landscape.

Sir Adam Beck's vision of generating power for the people is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago:

- our business puts people to work,
- it builds local economies, and
- it provides Ontarians with reliable, affordable and clean power.

So with that, I will just say to all the employees of OPG...

Thank you for being such great people and for your dedication, professionalism and resilience.

And my sincere thanks to all of you for attending today's lunch.

Scholarship

Before I go, there's one last thing I want to mention.

My wife Linda and I were very fortunate as students for the financial aid, without which we could not have completed our engineering studies at Cornell University.

We've now lived in Whitby for the past 13 years so we've grown a deep fondness and appreciation for the community in general and UOIT in particular.

UOIT's growth has been a success story for its students and the Durham region.

So as a token of our appreciation, we've established a bursary at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology for engineering and technical students.

It will give preference to First Nation and Métis students.

That's where today's very kind OEN honorarium is going.

And when I retire, we would kindly ask that our friends consider making a donation in lieu of gifts to this UOIT scholarship.

Thank you.