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OPG CELEBRATES NATIONAL BIOENERGY DAY Atikokan and Thunder Bay generating stations at forefront of technology

TORONTO: Today is National BioEnergy Day, and across North America organizations are raising awareness of how industry is keeping forests healthy while putting forest trimmings, and industry byproducts to use in producing renewable energy. OPG uses wood pellet biomass as fuel at our Thunder Bay and Atikokan generating stations (GS).

“Ontario is a leader in using biomass and I’m encouraged that OPG is leading the way with this exciting innovative technology,” says Ontario’s Energy Minister Bob Chiarelli. “Across the globe, government and industry are taking notice of what we are accomplishing in this province with bioenergy. I congratulate OPG, the forest companies, First Nations and others for helping power Ontario with cleaner energy.”

“Removing coal from OPG’s generation mix was North America’s largest climate change initiative,” says OPG President and CEO Jeff Lyash. “I’m proud that 99.7 per cent of the electricity Ontario Power Generation produces is free of greenhouse gas and smog causing emissions. Converting Atikokan and Thunder Bay generating stations to use biomass provides more value by helping to create a biomass industry in Ontario.”

OPG’s Thunder Bay GS is the first power station in North America, to operate commercially using advanced biomass, while Atikokan GS is North America’s largest capacity 100 per cent biomass fueled power plant.

OPG burned its last piece of coal to make electricity in 2014. It was North America’s single largest action to combat climate change.

Fast Facts:

- Atikokan and Thunder Bay generating stations provide renewable, dispatchable capacity that can be used for short periods of time when the power is urgently needed. It’s good insurance.
- Thunder Bay operates one unit on advanced biomass with a capacity of 153 MW.
- Atikokan is a one unit station with a capacity of just over 200 MW.

- These conversions helped maintain the local economic benefits these stations bring, including local jobs. The Atikokan conversion created several hundred jobs during construction and helped create a white biomass industry in Ontario.
- Both Atikokan fuel suppliers, Rentech, and Resolute are located in Northwest Ontario and have employment arrangements with local Aboriginal communities. As there is no Ontario supplier for advanced biomass used at Thunder Bay – steam treated advanced biomass pellets are imported from Arbaflame in Norway.
- OPG supports biomass research through its sponsorship of the OPG Bioenergy Learning Research Centre at Confederation College in Thunder Bay.

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