

1999 Newspaper Clippings

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

They are taking more away from us

Dear Editor: Shame on Bill Power for using his outdoor column in the St. John's Telegram to criticize Mr. Tobin's "turkeys" during his absence from the province.

Mr. Tobin is a busy man desperately jockeying for a crack at Canada's top post. He has a provincial election to kick off and his top gun on the Outdoors Resources Committee has resigned.

The man doesn't have time right now for political patronage. He is just too busy trying to secure the votes of us common folk. Mr. Tobin is not going to make unpopular decisions at this time like introducing a \$10 trout licence.

Mr. Power should not give up hope though. A post-election Brian Tobin may be just as patronizing as Brian Mulroney was a decade ago, after conning the Canadian electorate into voting for him a second time.

Even though we may be the poorest province in Canada, we are surely some of the richest people in the world when it comes to heritage and outdoors rights. Big dollar, self-serving groups from places like St. Andrews, N.B., New York City and within our own province, including our provincial government, have been working diligently to swindle us out of those rights. That is why concerned citizens have recently formed outdoor groups to counter those oppressive tactics.

The latest attack on our outdoor rights comes in the form of a lobby to impose yet another tax on individuals and families. This new tax would be better known as a trout licence.

Troutling in Newfoundland is a free of charge outdoor activities that is enjoyed by children and adults, rich and poor alike.

For Mr. Power, a \$10 bill may be easy to come by. For many cash-strapped Newfoundlanders, it is not.

A licence and fee is being proposed by the tourist oriented affiliates to supposedly collect angling data. That data would surely be altered and used against us to close many lakes, ponds and brooks to hook and retain troutling. But hook and release troutling would most certainly be permitted.

How many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want hook and release and barbless hook troutling? About 20 per cent is my guess; the same 20 per cent who are promoting hook and release salmon angling with the intent of driving the rest of us out of our rivers to make way for the rich tourist anglers.

Mr. Power has become so obsessed with his self-righteous blueprint for our outdoors that he alternates between promoting

SPAWN and SAEN to bashing DFO while ignoring the related views of the public majority.

Trout fishing on the Northern peninsula has rebounded since DFO announced their closure plans a few years ago. There are now no more truck loads of trout going across the Gulf.

Closing selected watersheds in some areas of the province for predetermined periods of time may be another conservation option. Hook and release during those closure periods is not an option and would not be tolerated by the people of this province.

Jed Sampson, Port au Port

Peter Kelly would gets his welcome

Dear Editor: The logical answer about the curious decision to hire Mr. Peter Kelly must be that for sometime now, Newfoundland has been a part of Canada.

In Canada when the system works, the best person gets the job "irrespective of ancestry", age, sex, race, etc. Never in 22 years spent in British Columbia was it suggested I should queue up at the back of the employment line because I was not a native British Columbian.

Imagine the rate of unemployment here today if Newfoundlanders on the mainland had been sent packing as the editor would apparently have Mr. Kelly do. When you say Newfoundland taxpayers pay for Mr. Kelly's job you conveniently ignore federal transfer payments that flow from west to east, never the other way.

It would seem that Newfoundland is part of a generous country and we could act in kind. As a native son I say welcome aboard Mr. Kelly, enjoy your time in Newfoundland, Canada.

Bill Ploughman, Corner Brook

Why are our power rates so high?

Dear Editor: Recent disputes over electrical pricing, seems to be a never ending topic.

Actually, it started in the mid-sixties when the Churchill Falls development was being discussed as the world's greatest source of electrical power. We were told at that time that Churchill Falls was the answer to most of our problems, and a few years ago, another premier was bent on selling Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro for a couple of hundred million dollars.

Now the chief executive officer for Newfoundland Power would like to increase the price of electricity, no doubt to be able to encourage his company to pay him and his comrades another nice raise.

But before we go any further, let's look at the high prices we are already paying for electricity in this province.

Most of our electricity is produced in the Maritime provinces, and Ontario, their electricity is produced by burning coal, oil and nuclear energy.

And because of the high cost of nuclear energy, the Ontario Power Corporation is \$45 billion in debt. Those projects are also dirty and dangerous, whereas in this province, our sources of energy are produced by clean-flowing water that costs nothing to turn the turbines.

So why are we paying the same rate as the people in the Maritimes and Ontario?

I am also surprised that the management of Newfoundland Power would have the face to burden the people of this province with an increase in electrical rates. We have thousands of families on the brink of starvation, while the CEO of Newfoundland Power takes a raise of \$33,000 to bring his salary up to \$333,000 with the excuse that high salaries are necessary to attract good people to supervise those companies.

Well, I believe it's about time that we found some of those good people, because electrical energy in this province is much too expensive.

Let's go back again to the Churchill Falls project. That development was delivering power to the province of Quebec in the early 1970s at a rate of about 3 mills, or three tenths of one cent per kilowatt hour. We know that the people of this province will never make any money during the lifetime of that contract, but 30 years after Churchill Falls went on stream, the price of that electricity has not changed, and apparently has not suffered any losses.

So if the cost to produce electricity at Churchill Falls is still three mills, why has the cost of electricity on the island increased 20 times the Churchill rate? Does it cost more for water to flow on the island than in Labrador, or are those on the island responsible for managing our resources only concerned for what they can get for themselves?

Electricity is not a luxury in this country, it's a necessity and should be delivered at a reasonable cost. We the people own the rivers, lakes and brooks that drive the turbines that produce our electricity, so there is no need for the power to provide essential services and comfort to our homes to cost the same as other parts of the country that have to burn expensive fuels.

And those managing our power, if they cannot reduce the cost per kilowatt to their customers, they should resign and let a better people run our resources.

Ted Shears, Rocky Harbour

THE WESTERN STAR JAN 8/99

SATURDAY, JAN. 16, 1999 EVENING TELEGRAM P. 1

Electricity rates to go up one per cent

But Power Corp. must rebate excess earnings

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

There was bad news and good news for electricity consumers in a ruling handed down by the Public Utilities Board (PUB) Friday.

The bad news is Newfoundland Power has been given permission to increase rates on consumption of electricity, though not the basic charge, by one per cent, raising revenue by \$3.8 million to cover increased costs.

Because the revenue hike is designed to cover greater costs, it won't

increase profits, according to Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate communications.

But there are two bits of good news as a result of the PUB ruling, which is based on a public hearing held between Nov. 9 and Dec. 8.

The board ruled there were excess revenues in 1992-93 and ordered the after-tax amount, \$1.9 million, must be

shared equally with ratepayers over a five-year period. Therefore, the consumers' share, \$354,000, will reduce rates over that period, said the board.

The actual amount of the reduction has yet to be worked out.

The second good-news aspect of Friday's ruling stems from the combination of two public hearings held by the PUB last year. Following a two-week spring hearing, the board reduced Newfoundland Power's allowed rate of return for 1998 to 9.25 per cent from 11 per cent.

"When both the spring and fall rate adjustments are taken together, they

reflect a rate decrease over 1997 rates of approximately one per cent," the board said in its ruling.

A board survey done in the past week showed the newly approved rates are "in the middle of the ranges of rates paid by all consumers across Canada, on average." The PUB also ordered an automatic adjustment formula be used for the purpose of establishing rates beginning in 2000. "This automatic adjustment formula will reflect changes in long-term interest rates and their effect on the company's rate of return," said the board.

See POWER, page 2



Dennis O'Keefe

Power Co. disagrees with decision on excess earnings

Continued from page 1

"It will allow these changes to take place without the need for a public hearing and thereby will reduce regulatory costs in the future," the board said.

The PUB ruling said the company's level of executive and management compensation is "accepted as reasonable in the absence of any evidence that it is excessive or otherwise."

Newfoundland Power said Friday the ruling "confirms the utility's credibility and efficiency in providing customers with safe, reliable electrical service."

However, Pike said the company disagrees with the decision on excess earnings.

"We're being penalized for a decision we made that was in the best interest of consumers," he said.

Dennis Browne, consumer advocate, said Friday, that even with the approved rate change, "consumers are still better off than they were in December 1997 by millions of dollars."

Browne also welcomed the ruling concerning excess earnings.

Overall, he said the decision was "an effort by the board to balance the

interests of the company with those of its customers."

Coun. Dennis O'Keefe, one of the people who appeared before the board at the fall hearing, also felt the board had attempted to take a "middle-of-the-road" approach in its ruling.

However, O'Keefe told The Telegram, "I feel the middle of the road was too much in Newfoundland Power's favour."

"We're being penalized for a decision we made that was in the best interest of consumers."

Bob Pike,
Newfoundland Power

He said a one per cent increase, at this time, is too much for many people to bear.

With regard to the issue of excess earnings, O'Keefe said, "If the earnings were truly excessive, I feel they should

have been fully returned to consumers."

Sam Synard, president of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities, said it was reassuring to hear that electricity rates will be lower than they were in 1997.

John Peddle, executive director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Health Care Association, said while rates will remain below what they were in 1997, "any increase will have a negative impact on the health-care system."

ST. JOHN'S TELEGRAM
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 20, 1999

ELECTRICITY RATES

PUB ignored concerns about collection policies: Harris

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

The Public Utilities Board (PUB) does not seem to have taken seriously public concerns about Newfoundland Power's collection policies, says Jack Harris, provincial New Democratic Party (NDP) leader.

During the board's fall public hearing, Harris and his constituency assistant, Cathy Young, made presentations related to difficulties encountered by customers with the utility's policies.

However, Harris told The Telegram he was "surprised and quite disappointed" with the response contained in the board's recently released order dealing with the hearing.

"They didn't appear to take seriously the 1,600-1,800 customers that are cut off each year," Harris said. "I expected they would have taken their plight more seriously."

The order said, "The board will order that, in response to Mr. Harris' proposals, Newfoundland Power continue to utilize the current redirect program, involving the Department of Human Resources and Employment,

the customer and the company to try to mitigate the effects on consumers of accounts that have fallen into arrears."

The PUB said it will continue to receive complaints and to monitor them in the interest of consumers.

The complaints addressed by Harris and Young included an inflexible and inefficient period for payments once an account is in disconnect status, a lack of information on disconnect policies and an inability of customers to contact personnel who would be authorized to deal with their problems.

The board, in its order, said Harris had also referred to an apparent lack of understanding by customers and a "perceived indifference to their concerns," and the absence of any type of ombudsman who could assist to resolve collection disputes.

In his final argument, Harris called



"They didn't appear to take seriously the 1,600-1,800 customers that are cut off each year."

*Jack Harris,
NDP leader*

on the board to study the cost-effectiveness of the utility's collection policies; order the company to implement a policy of flexible payment schedules to customers unable to meet the established payment requirement; and require the company to establish the position of a dispute resolution officer.

There is also a need to establish clear lines of internal communications so staff performing cutoffs are immediately informed of the payment of delinquent accounts, Harris said.

Earl Ludlow, Newfoundland Power's vice-president of operations, in response to Harris, told the board, "although the rules and regulations contain a disconnection policy on accounts unpaid after 30 days,

each account is treated on an individual basis and, with few exceptions, the process progresses through a mini-

mum period of 84 days."

He also explained the redirect program in effect between the Department of Human Resources and Employment, its clients and Newfoundland Power. The program, implemented in September 1998, allows arrears to be paid off over a 12-month period.

Ludlow explained payment arrangement guidelines and the PUB said a survey of 10 electric utilities in Canada showed the practice of Newfoundland Power was "more lenient than most of the other companies."

There is an adequate system in place for dealing with complaints and, in fact, only 29 questions or complaints were received in the 12-month period ending Sept. 30, 1998, he said.

In its order, the PUB said it believes the progressive steps for payment of accounts provide an adequate opportunity to avoid service disconnections and that the company "carries out a disconnection only when all these efforts, including an attempt at personal contact by a service representative to assist the customer in making acceptable payment arrangements, have failed."

EVENING TELEGRAM
FRIDAY, JAN. 29, 1999

PROVINCE

**Utility, candidates
poles apart**

Newfoundland Power is reminding candidates for the Feb. 9 provincial election that it's illegal to put posters on utility poles.

"It is a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety regulations to nail, staple or otherwise attach posters and signs to utility poles," said company spokesman Bob Pike.

He noted signs, and the nails and staples used to attach them, pose a serious safety hazard to power company workers required to climb the poles as part of their jobs.

Newfoundland Power approved for one per cent rate hike

BY MICHELLE HICKS
RB News

Starting today, Feb. 1, Newfoundland Power's customers will see their electric bills increase by one per cent, but that's not all the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (PUB) approved in its ruling released on Jan. 22.

And it didn't take long for Newfoundland Power to issue a press release expressing their belief that the PUB ruling confirmed the company's "credibility and efficiency in providing customers with safe, reliable electrical service."

A public hearing was held last spring, and was later continued this past November and December 1998 to consider several issues relating to Newfoundland Power, including:

- a) an average increase in rate of 1.31 per cent for 1999;
- b) revision of the rules for Newfoundland Power's delivery of service;
- c) the utility company's 1999 capital budget;
- d) revisions to its retirement income plan;
- e) executive and management compensation;
- f) review of possible excess earnings in 1992-93;
- g) the relationship between the rate of return on rate base and the cost of components of the capital structure of Newfoundland Power Inc.; and,
- h) other matters related to the finalization of rate for 1998 and the setting of rates for 1999.

Approval was granted for items b through e, as well as the finalization of rates for 1998.

It was also ordered that Newfoundland Power pay the PUB's expenses arising out of the hearing, including the

expenses of the consumer advocate.

OTHER ITEMS

The board found that the earnings from 1992-93 - \$1,908,000 - were excess earnings above those approved on rate base by board order. A decision was made to share the excess earnings equally between the company and rate payers, thereby reducing rates to consumers over the next five years.

Here, Newfoundland Power's Bob Pike, manager of corporate communications, said the utility company was "disappointed, and disagrees with the PUB's decision that half of the earnings in 1992 and 1993 in question were disallowed."

"The company's actions, at that time, to reduce capital expenditures in light of the economic downturn clearly benefited consumers, and were approved by the PUB," he added.

An automatic adjustment formula has been ordered to be used for the purpose of establishing rates starting in the year 2000. This formula will reflect changes in long-term interest rates and their effect on the company's rate of return.

It will also allow the adjustment to take place without the need for a public hearing, which, in turn, will reduce the regulatory costs in the future.

As for approval of interim rates for 1998, the board concluded that when both spring and fall rate adjustments are taken together, they show a rate decrease over 1997 rates of approximately one per cent. For the 1998 period, revenue from rates was reduced by two per cent, as compared to 1997. For the 1999 forecast, revenue from rates will be one per cent lower than in 1997.

Newfoundland Power's \$36.8 million capital budget includes several items to enhance reliability, such as \$7.5 million for distribution; \$3.5 million for insular replacement; \$2.2 million for

system controls and \$2 million for pole replacement.

Approval was given to the company to increase the basic benefits paid to individuals who retired before Jan. 1, 1993 by two per cent, and amortized over a 15-year period starting July 1, 1998. As well, the funding of the pension liability associated with the two per cent increase over a 15-year period starting July 1, 1998.

SURVEY RESULTS

During Jan. 11-15, 1999, the board undertook a survey of current domestic electric utility rates across Canada.

It shows that Newfoundland Power customers are in the middle of the range of rates paid by all consumers across Canada on average.

It noted only Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia

and the City of Calgary have rates consistently lower than in Newfoundland for seven monthly energy consumption levels selected.

For medium (500 kWh) to high (3,000 kWh) monthly domestic consumption, Newfoundland rates are lower than in Nova Scotia,

Prince Edward Island, the average of Ontario locations reviewed, and Alberta, excluding Calgary.

As for New Brunswick, rates in Newfoundland are lower for consumption up to 1,000 kWh, and higher for consumption over 1,000 kWh.

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Constituents
in the
District of:

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Stephenville East



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• I have always voted for other parties but I know Len Muise to be a hard working, conscientious person in this election I will:
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• I, or my spouse is related to Len in some way and it's great to have a family member involved in politics so in this election I will:
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• I'm not in any of the above groups but in this election I will:
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CORNER BROOK WINTER CARNIVAL

introduces its

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Newtel Communications is a Gold sponsor for the 1999 Corner Brook Winter Carnival. In photo from left are: Jeannette Christopher, chair of the Carnival's corporate sponsor committee; Vic Simmons, resident manager, western Newfoundland and Labrador with Newtel; and Bernice Buckle, Carnival chair.



Also supporting the Corner Brook Winter Carnival as a Gold sponsor is Newfoundland Power. In photo from left are: Pat Dormody, event chairperson with the Carnival; Harvey St. Croix, energy consultant with Newfoundland Power; and Paul Neil, public relations and president of Winter Carnival Inc.



The Western Star is a Gold sponsor for the Corner Brook Winter Carnival. In photo from left are: Pat Dormody, event chairperson; Paula Ludlow, advertising manager with the Star; and Paul Neil, public relations and president of Winter Carnival Inc.

PLATINUM SPONSORS - Contribution of \$5,000 & over; **GOLD SPONSORS** - \$2,500-\$4,999; **SILVER** - \$1,000-\$2,499; **BRONZE** - \$500-\$999

CORNER BROOK WINTER CARNIVAL - FEBRUARY 20-MARCH 7

MANY WILL SHINE AND HAVE A FUN TIME AT WINTER CARNIVAL '99

The Star Log, Feb 10, 1999

Regional Hospital and later released.

Deer Lake still not safe

■ The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Deer Lake are continuing to advise residents that the ice on Deer Lake is not safe. They are advising the public to disregard the tree line that has been erected across the lake across from the Rod and Gun in Pasadena as the ice is very thin.

Town's water meets Canadian standards

■ A recent test of Deer Lake's water quality shows all is well.

While the tap water test did show that copper and iron levels were a little higher than recommended drinking water limits, those levels could be avoided by running the tap for five minutes in the mornings and after extended periods of low water use.

"It's an ongoing sampling program," says Town Manager Walter Dominic. "We monitor our water, in conjunction with the Department of Environment, on a regular basis to ensure that it stands up with the Canadian Water Guidelines and that certainly seems to be the case. We're well within the guidelines."

The raw water test showed the color was slightly darker than Canadian standards. Raw water is water that has not yet been treated. This level was consistent with past tests. Color limits are set for aesthetic reasons and are no cause for concern. Water high in color has high organic content.

A third test showed that Deer Lake drinking water is well within the trihalomethanes (THMs) limit. THMs are by-products which may form when raw water containing natural organic matter, decaying plants or human and animal wastes, is treated with chlorine. High levels of THMs have been known to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Levels are highest in summer and lowest in winter.

In nine months, the total subsidy to recreation was slightly below budget at \$90,787," he said. "Therefore the decision to operate the stadium did not

However, Town Manager Walter Dominic said it was because they hadn't intended to hire staff for the stadium as early as they had.

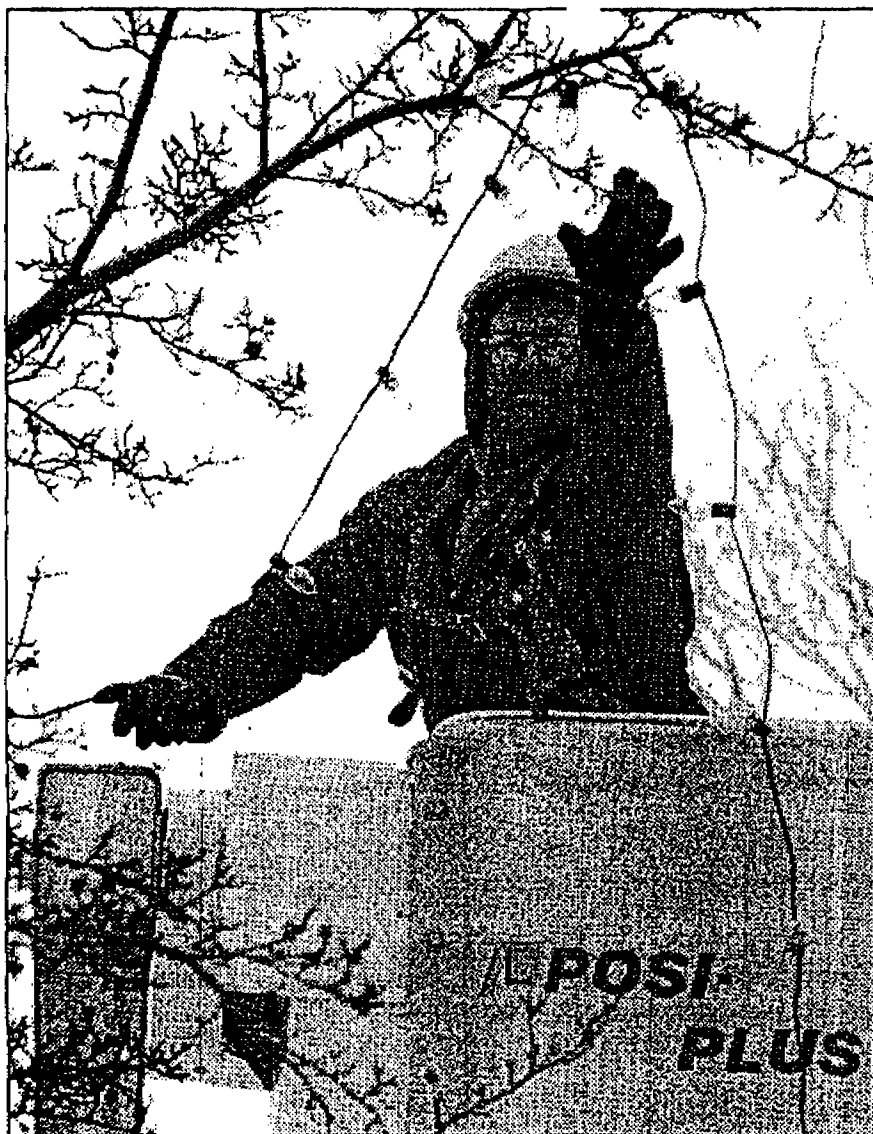
which a portion should be allocated to summer recreation, even with the subsidies to the organizations, the stadium still made a profit to the end of

the recent upgrades to the stadium will cut down on future costs. He also says the council is looking for more events to bring into the stadium.



POWER SUPPLY – Newfoundland Power workers Byron Brake and Ralph Martin ensure there will be no shortages to the Hodder Memorial Stadium during the Canada Winter Games. They are fixing the lines so power can be rerouted to the stadium by other means if necessary.

The Humber Log Feb 17, 1999



HIGH WIRE ACT - Art Bennett of Newfoundland Power was cruising high above Margaret Bowater Park last week stringing lights. The park

will be turned into a twinkling winter wonderland for the Winter Games with nightly concerts and activities.

The Thunder Log, Feb 17, 1999

Take care of your eyes. You'd be lost without them.

The loss of sight can happen to anyone without warning. That's why early detection through a regular visit to an Optometrist is important. A Doctor of Optometry will perform a painless, but thorough eye health examination that can help detect underlying eye disease. The visit is affordable and is often covered by insurance. Visit an Optometrist regularly even if you think your vision hasn't changed. You don't need a referral, simply look under Optometrist in the Yellow Pages. After all, you should never take your eyes for granted.

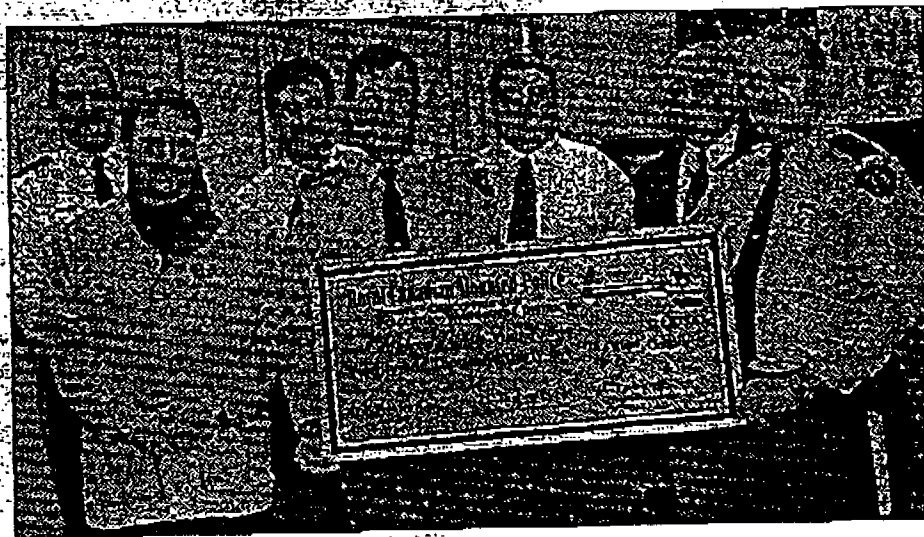


In association with The Newfoundland Association of Optometrists

SOCIALS

FEBRUARY 23, 1999 • PAGE B6 • THE COMPASS

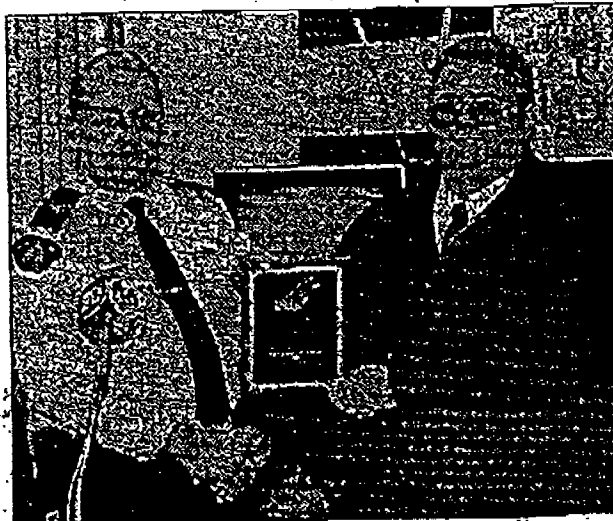
Donation



MAJOR CONTRIBUTION - Cpl. Ian Fowler, right, of the Trinity-Conception District RCMP presented the Children's Wish Foundation with a cheque for \$21,035.63. The district combined with the Placentia Whitbourne RCMP in raising the funds. On hand for the presentation were, from back left - Inspector Robert Hurman (officer in charge, area management east), Leo Flynn (owner/operator Foodland, Carbonear), Darryl Butt (Newfoundland Power), and Lew Hounsell (senior sales represen., Kraft Canada Inc.) Front - Rod Stockley (CHVO), Staff Sgt. John Bishop (Trinity-Conception RCMP District) and Fowler.

Presentation

LIGHT WORK - Cpl. Ian Fowler of the Trinity-Conception District RCMP presents Darryl Butt of Newfoundland Power with a plaque in recognition of Newfoundland Power's efforts in putting lights on the RCMP-Children's Wish Foundation Christmas Tree, erected annually in front of the Trinity-Conception District office.



The Western Star, Feb 17, 1999

Don Newman (center), vice-president of finance and administration with Marine Atlantic, presents his company's platinum sponsorship (\$5,000 or more) to Corner Brook Carnival Committee members Jeannette Christopher (left), sponsorship chairperson and Bernice Buckle, carnival chairperson.

CFCB Radio is another platinum sponsor (\$5,000 or more) of the Corner Brook Winter Carnival. Making the company's donation to carnival chairperson Bernice Buckle (center) and sponsorship chairperson Jeannette Christopher is Roger Humber, general manager of CFCB.

Corner Brook Pulp and Paper is a up) of this year's Corner Brook W chairperson Bernice Buckle acce from Allan Vatcher, general mana; Paper.



Newfoundland Power is a gold sponsor (\$2,500 to \$4,999) of the Corner Brook Winter Carnival. Here, carnival events chairperson Patricia Dormody (left) and Dr. Paul Neil, president of Corner Brook Winter Carnival Inc., accept the donation from Newfoundland Power energy consultant Harvey St. Croix.

Newtel Communications is a gold sponsor (\$2,500 to \$4,999) of the Corner Brook Winter Carnival. Here, Vic Simmons, NewTel's regional manager, presents the company's donation to Jeannette Christopher (left), sponsorship chairperson, and Bernice Buckle, carnival chairperson.

The We Brook W Paul.Nei per's d Star.



NEWFOUNDLAND POWER

PUB ruling sparks earning decline: CEO

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

Newfoundland Power has attributed a \$3.3-million decline in its 1998 earnings to a reduction in its allowed rate of return by the regulator and the resulting decrease in electrical rates.

In the fiscal year ended Dec. 31, 1998, earnings applicable to common shares were \$21.6 million compared to \$24.9 million, the utility reported Friday.

"This decrease is a direct result of a July 1998 Public Utilities Board (PUB) decision which reduced Newfoundland Power's allowed rate of return on common equity from 11 per cent to 9.25 per cent and the resulting 2.1 per cent decrease in electrical rates," said Philip Hughes, president and chief executive officer.

Earnings per common share were \$2.09 last year compared to \$2.42 in 1997.

Hughes said 1998 revenues were \$335.8 million, \$7.9 million lower than 1997 revenue.

"Revenue from energy sales was directly impacted by the 2.1 per cent reduction in electrical rates," he said.

"The impact of the decline in rates during 1998 has been partially offset by a significant reduction in operating expenses achieved during the year."

He said despite higher than normal regulatory costs, Newfoundland Power reduced operating expenses by \$4.1 million to \$244.2 million in 1998.

Operating costs per customer decreased to \$259 in 1998 from \$290 in the previous year.

"Reductions in operating expenses have been somewhat offset by a \$9-million increase in purchased power costs and an increase of \$1.3 million in depreciation expense over the 1997 level."



Philip Hughes

Decrease

Hughes said depreciation expense has increased as a result of capital projects valued at a total of more than \$45 million undertaken in 1998.

Hughes noted the PUB issued an order last month providing for an overall increase in rates of approximately 1.16 per cent, effective Feb. 1.

"Despite this increase, electrical rates charged to customers currently reflect an approximate decrease of one per cent from 1997 rates."

Meanwhile, Newfoundland Power has announced dividends to be paid

on four different categories of its preferred shares.

While Fortis Inc., the utility's parent company holds all of Newfoundland Power's common shares, its preferred shares are traded on the Montreal exchange.

The company has announced the following dividends:

- \$0.1375 per share on 5 1/2 per cent Cumulative Redeemable First Preference Share Series A, and \$0.13125 on 5 1/4 per cent Cumulative Redeemable First preference Share Series B, both to be paid May 1 to shareholders of record on April 16.

- \$0.18125 on 7 1/4 per cent Cumulative Redeemable First Preference Share Series D, to be paid June 1, to shareholders of record on May 14.

- \$0.19 per share on 7.60 per cent Cumulative Redeemable First Preference Share Series G to be paid April 1 to shareholders of record on March 12.

Meanwhile, the appointment of a new vice-president of Newfoundland Power has been announced by Dr. Linda Inkpen, chairwoman of the utility's board of directors.

Nora Duke, who was previously manager of human resources, has been appointed vice-president, customer and corporate services.

The position had been vacant for a couple of years.

ENTERPRISE

THE EXPRESS, March 31-April 6, 1999



Despite the trend of mega-mergers, Newfoundland electricity companies will remain separate

BY ROGER LEBLANC
The Express

Hardly a week goes by lately without an announcement of a major corporate merger.

Most will remember the failed bid of four of Canada's biggest banks to create two giants, and more recently, the word the Atlantic region's telephone companies are to be under one name.

Everywhere you look, corporations are jumping into bed with each other muttering the phrase, "bigger is better". At the same time, they warn the nervous public that in order to survive in the global economy, Canada's corporations must be able to compete against American, European and Asian conglomerates.

In the wake of the formation of the communications holding company AtlantacCo and the announcement two American power companies had struck a deal worth nearly \$5-billion, *The Express* took a look at a couple of companies here in Newfoundland which had the potential to unite into one.

This province has two companies which provide electricity to the population: Newfoundland Power, which is privately owned, and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, which is a Crown corporation. Both generate electricity, transmit it and distribute it. Could a merger of these two be in the making?

"Absolutely not," says Hydro's manager of corporate affairs Don Barrett.

Barrett understands why merger speculation would start, but says the public wants to keep a hand in the electricity game. No talks on the matter are happening and he expects none in the future.

As for the government's take, a spokesperson in the Mines and Energy Department confirms the public power company is not for sale.

"We're not looking in that direction here," he says flatly. Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate

□ "It's quite possible there could be some structural changes with the companies."

— Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power



communications, was much more forthcoming. While no one is preparing 'For Sale' signs for Hydro's offices, a review is underway of the whole electricity sector in Newfoundland, he says. This review is examining current regulations, the industry's structure, pricing, the public utilities board and more.

"In light of the profound changes the electricity industry as a whole is currently undergoing, government's plans to develop the hydroelectric potential of the Churchill River and the forecasted energy requirements of the province over the next decade," Premier Brian Tobin explains in a media release, "I believe this is the opportune time to conduct a thorough review of the province's energy policy."

Chuck Furey, who was the minister of Mines and Energy last August when these comments were made, adds "This review will not raise the issue of Hydro privatization. The industry structure review will examine whether or not generation and transmission should be held by one corporate enti-

ty, but will not contemplate ownership of Hydro by other than the people of the province."

"What they are looking at is the existing structure. The industry is going in other jurisdictions is it's broken down into three distinct categories: generation, transmission and distribution. So the review will be looking at the structure and that is Newfoundland Power has a limited amount of generation, some transmission and is mainly a distribution company. Newfoundland Hydro has a major amount of generation, a fair amount of transmission and it has a distribution. So there are some overlaps," Pike explains. "It's quite possible there could be some structural changes with the companies."

Ontario Hydro has already broken down its structure to be able to take on competition when it comes. He explains Newfoundland is not in an oddity in the electricity sector with public and private companies in the market, although it does stand out in the Atlantic region provinces like P.E.I. and Nova Scotia are completely private. New Brunswick is completely public. But, Ontario has a corporation along with about 300 private companies of which are operated under municipalities.

As well, British Columbia has both public and private electricity corporations.

However, with Newfoundland's electric entities, which lacks the other excels. Despite North American trend, a merger is inevitable? The government looked at this about 10 years ago to determine Hydro's value and what debt to go with it, Pike notes. But Newfoundlanders didn't go on the auction block.

"At that time there was some major public lobby: some major public outcry in the government selling of which from the public's perspective was a prime job says. "Now will anything happen in the foreseeable future? It's very unlikely."

TELEGRAM

Wednesday, April 7, 1999

BAY ROBERTS

Utility poles down

Monday's snowstorm caused considerable damage in the Conception Bay North area.

Newfoundland Power spokesman Dennis Byrne said the company's regional service centre at Carbonear reported more than 40 utility poles fell under the weight of ice on Monday evening.

The majority of the damage occurred in the Bay Roberts area where thousands of residents experienced electrical, telephone and cable television outages for periods up to 24 hours.

The heaviest damage occurred along the Conception Bay highway, between Spaniard's Bay and Bay Roberts, where nine utility poles cracked and fell, scattering wires across the highway.

Byrne said in addition to outages caused by downed poles, there were numerous other transmission and feeder line problems in the area.

STORM



GARY HEBBARD/THE TELEGRAM

Nolan Shiner (left) and Rick Kenny weren't daunted by the record snowfall that hit eastern Newfoundland Monday and Tuesday. The two were out, helping to clear the drive-

way of their Portugal Cove Road residence, each swinging a shovel from their wheelchairs.

Avalon shutdown

Spring blizzard wreaks havoc from St. John's to C.B.N.

BY TRACY BARRON
The Telegram

Mount Pearl Mayor Dave Denine admits his city was caught off guard by Monday's blizzard, which dumped 80 centimetres of snow on the northeast Avalon, downed power lines and caused power outages from St. John's to Trepassy.

"Oh Geez," he said, sounding overwhelmed by the city's snowy plight.

"I haven't seen anything this bad in the middle of winter, let alone April."

Mount Pearl and Conception Bay South had scaled back their winter crews. Even snow-clearing contracts under the Avalon Peninsula's school boards expired at the end of March.

March may have ended like a lamb, but April had something to say.



JOE GIBBONS/THE TELEGRAM
Lineman Kevin Pope works in Mount Pearl Tuesday.

p.m. Tuesday.

Radio stations announced Tuesday morning which businesses remained opened as opposed to which ones were

Not only did all arrivals and departures grind to a halt at St. John's airport Tuesday, power was knocked out.

The Bell Island ferry was tied up for nearly 24 hours, the last run leaving Portugal Cove at 6:50 p.m. Monday night. Another didn't leave the dock until 4:30

closed. Convenience outlets and some hardware stores stayed open to supply batteries, candles and food.

Government buildings, Memorial University and many retail businesses didn't bother to open.

Even some Newfoundland Power crews abandoned their vehicles in snowdrifts early Tuesday morning, giving in to the storm's power.

"The most trouble we've had around St. John's has been just getting around to the trouble," Newfoundland Power spokesman Bob Pike said.

"It got to the point the (crews) just couldn't move around and they just couldn't see, so we were trying to get them to get some rest so we would have more people (during) the day."

See SOUTHERN, related story, page 2

Related stories, page 4

A challenging line of work

The power's out, the streets aren't plowed and you're in the dark — that's when these fellows snap into action

BY SEAN EDWARDS STACEY
The Telegram

On Thursday, a team of linemen from Newfoundland Power were busy replacing a downed pole outside the Coast Guard building on the south side of St. John's.

Lonz Pearce, Jim Headley and Todd Noseworthy of St. John's — as well as Randy Pennell, a backup worker from Corner Brook — were just a few of the many linemen who were working hard to get everything back to normal following the snowstorm that dumped 80 cm of snow on the northeast Avalon and east winds gusting up to 110 kilometres per hour.

The spring blizzard that began Monday afternoon and ended Tuesday morning was the worst storm of the year. It downed power lines and caused power outages from St. John's to Trepansey.

Pearce, a lineman with 33 years' experience, began work Tuesday at 5 a.m. and worked until midnight. After an eight-hour break he went back to work. For Pearce and his fellow linemen, 16-hour work days are nothing out of the ordinary when bad weather causes trouble with power lines. And coming in to help out, as Pennell did, is standard practice, as well.

When the weather gets rough, linemen are on call and all regions get involved. The goal is to get power restored as quickly as possible.

By Thursday, power was largely restored to all of the northeast Avalon and linemen spent the day working on isolated trouble spots.

Not as bad as '84

The past week's storm downed 60 Newfoundland Power poles. That number pales by comparison with the hundreds of poles that were downed in April 1984, when one of the worst ice storms ever struck St. John's and the northeast Avalon.

The storm of '84 left 200,000 people without heat and light for days; on Bell Island the power outage lasted for almost two weeks.

Ice storms spell havoc for power lines and this week's blizzard-like conditions were a "sleazebag storm in disguise," says Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate communications. The big trouble was wires downed by the combination of heavy snow and high winds.

Islandwide, Newfoundland Power services 180,000 customers and has a line staff of 165.



Above: Linemen work on a transformer pole in St. John's before the days of bucket trucks and aerial lifts. Right: (from left) Stan Lynch, Gerald Walsh and Mike Gordon use a dog and costume to carry crossarms to a work site in 1945.

"When it's too bad for anyone else to go out, that's when these guys are out"

Sean LaCour,
regional manager
Newfoundland Power

There are 50 linemen at the main service centre in St. John's; the rest are spread throughout the island at service centres at Whitbourne, Carbon-eat, Burin, Clarendville, Port Union, Gander, Grand Falls, Corner Brook, Stephenville and Port aux Basques, as well as at 12 two-person district stations.

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro has linemen, too, a total of 90 in the province. Of course employees who work on the lines can be male or female, but although Hydro does have one woman in the second year of a four-year apprenticeship, there are currently no women on duty here in this line of work. In Newfoundland, linemen are, for now, exclusively men.

It is the linemen, those guys who climb poles as high as 75 feet, in winds of more than 100 km/h, who are the unsung heroes of Newfoundland Power.

"They're the heroes of our business. They're like Search and Rescue. When it's too bad for anyone else to go out, that's when these guys are out," says Sean LaCour, the company's St. John's regional manager. "Those guys put their heart into their work."

Being a lineman is a "very, very challenging job," says LaCour.

It's also a very dangerous job. When you're dealing with live power lines, there are no second chances. A mistake could cost you your life.

Even though the work is precarious, there are amazingly few fatalities.

In 1994, a Hydro lineman was electrocuted in Norris Point on the Northern Peninsula.

The last fatality at Newfoundland Power occurred in 1978 when a lineman was electrocuted in Bowwood. LaCour says despite the very real risks, more people are killed in construction trades than in linework. He puts the low fatality rate among linemen down to a very high awareness and understanding of the hazards of the job.

Close calls

Bob Pike points out that while few linemen die on the job, there have been a number of close calls. They're looked upon as wake-up calls requiring intense investigation.

Ian Costello is a Ferryland native who has been a lineman with Newfoundland Power for 25 years. His closest call came a few years ago.

He was doing installation work at Newfoundland Hardwoods in Donovan's Industrial Park when a defective transformer faulted and blew. Although he was wearing protective clothing and safety glasses, the resulting explosion caused burns which kept him off work for two weeks.

"Without my safety glasses, I would have been blinded," he says.

Although the work is high risk, Costello wouldn't want to do anything else.

"I love my work. If they offered me double the money to be in the office, I'd say no," he says.



Above: Lineman Lonz Pearce removes reusable pieces from a utility pole that fell under the weight of wet snow and ice in this week's storm. Below left: Lineman Todd Noseworthy installs the cross brace on a new telephone pole near the Coast Guard building on the southside of St. John's. The pole it replaces broke under the weight of snow. Below right: Lineman Ian Costello has been climbing utility poles for 25 years.



Costello is aware of the dangers of the job but says he doesn't let it worry him.

"If I worried," he says, "I couldn't do my job."

Newfoundland Power stresses the importance of on-the-job safety to its linemen. Standard gear includes body harnesses, protective clothing, hard hats, safety glasses, and steel-toe boots. When they're working on live lines, linemen wear insulated rubber gloves and aprons. There are safety meetings once a month and at least three days a month are devoted to safety issues.

"They're taught to identify hazards," says Pike. "We can't eliminate hazards, we have to learn to work with them."

Required to upgrade

Costello, like most of the guys he works with, did a nine-month lineman course at what is now the College of the North Atlantic and followed that up with a four-year apprenticeship with Newfoundland Power. He and the other linemen are still not finished with school. In order to keep up to date, Newfoundland Power linemen are required to go back to school for six weeks every year.

Costello didn't work in the most recent snowstorm. Three weeks ago, while he was out on a service call, his truck was rear-ended. He's been off work ever since. But he has plenty of experience with other storms, including the infamous one of 1984.

He talks about the dangers of the job. He speaks, too, with fondness of the friendliness of Newfoundlanders.

In rural areas, in particular, after they've finished up a job, linemen are often invited in for a cup of tea and a sandwich.

At Newfoundland Power's service centre on Duffy Place in St. John's, the basement is linemen territory.

There's a truck bay where every day wheeled baskets are filled with equipment needed for each vehicle. There are rooms for meetings and classes and lunch.

In one corner of what's called the foreman's room, there's a poster with the faces of four Third World children. "The line department's sponsored children," reads the caption underneath.

Costello says linemen give \$2 a payday to support the children. Any money left over goes to the local food bank.

Apr. 10, 1999
The Telegram

Storm creates another storm

Newfoundland Light and Power came in for harsh criticism at last week's Holyrood Council meeting for what the council sees as poor maintenance of the company's infrastructure in the town.

As Councillor John

McCarthy put it, if we had winters like we had 20 years ago, this town would be without power all winter if it had to depend on the current state of the power structures.

Councillor McCarthy said power poles that had

been damaged more than a year ago were the ones that collapsed during this month's storm and left the town without power for 48 hours.

Other councillors agreed with what they consider an infrastructure in a

poor state of repair and a preventative maintenance program that leaves a lot to be desired.

Councillor McCarthy noted that the main road through the town was blocked for two days and fire and ambulance services were disrupted. He said the town was lucky it did not experience a major emergency during the storm.

Council will write the company requesting that they upgrade facilities in the community.

Council will also put a stronger push on developing its own emergency plan to have the town ready to respond to situations engendered by such a storm.

Said the Mayor, "in thinking about an emergency plan we usually think about a plane crash or a major fire at a tank farm but communities face emergencies from such things as floods and snowstorms and we must be ready for these sorts of things."

ENERGY

Power corp. to beef up system

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

Newfoundland Power is moving ahead with plans to substantially improve the reliability of its electrical system and reducing the length of time and area impacted when power failures do occur, according to Bob Pike, manager of corporate communications.

The three-year project, valued at close to \$4 million, will involve completion of a new building to house a state-of-the-art control centre. As well, 40 remote terminal units (RTUs) will be installed around the province, Pike told The Telegram Friday.

As part of that project, the utility has awarded a \$2.2 million contract to Valmet Automation's SAGE Systems Division of Houston, Texas for the re-

placement of its System Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system.

Valmet will supply Newfoundland Power with its new Open Architecture System SCADA system, incorporating supervisory control with an information management platform that features both advanced distribution and energy management applications.

The Houston firm will also provide and install the 40 RTUs.

Pike said the building that will house the new control centre is being constructed next to the existing centre on Topsail Road.

"The present centre is maxed out, we can't add additional capacity to it," Pike said.

He said some work has begun on the building, for which all necessary approvals have been granted, and a contract is expected to be let soon for

completion of the work.

The RTUs will be installed in phases between now and 2001.

It is hoped to have the new control centre up and running by September, initially with the use of computer screens, Pike said. But by early 2000, a complete wall of the building will display information and data on the system, particularly from the RTUs.

"This centre is really the nerve centre of the entire electrical system," Pike said. "The new technology will allow us to remotely control more of the system."

He said it will provide data from substations and even from particular electrical lines more quickly and will also help to head off problems before they actually occur.

When a problem is detected, the centre will supply details about it and will

be able to isolate the problem area.

"That means the area affected by a power outage, for example, can be reduced to the immediate area and its impact greatly reduced," Pike said. "It will also considerably reduce the time in which repairs can be carried out."

"It will give us a lot more flexibility and control."

The centre will be staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

In the meantime, Newfoundland Power already has in place a scanning system which uses infrared cameras to help avoid electrical problems before they develop.

"We can take a picture of a transformer or condenser and, if there is an area which is weak, it will heat up and the infrared camera detects that, so we can identify the problem and fix it before anything happens."

Wednesday, July 28/99.

Power station could be gone by October

BY ROGER LEBLANC

The Express

Residents on Southside Road will be getting some mail from Newfoundland Power soon, but bills won't be included.

The company will be informing people about the future of its Southside power station and the work that is to start on it in the coming months.

Mary Tucker, a spokesperson for Newfoundland Power, says the 43-year-old station on the St. John's waterfront is to be demolished.

"It's going to be leveled, basically. We'll hold onto (the land). There's no immediate plans of what we're going to do with it," she says. "Basically, it's going to look like a parking lot when it's finished in October... It's deteriorated to the point where it's of no use to anybody. We're going to tear it down before it becomes a hazard."

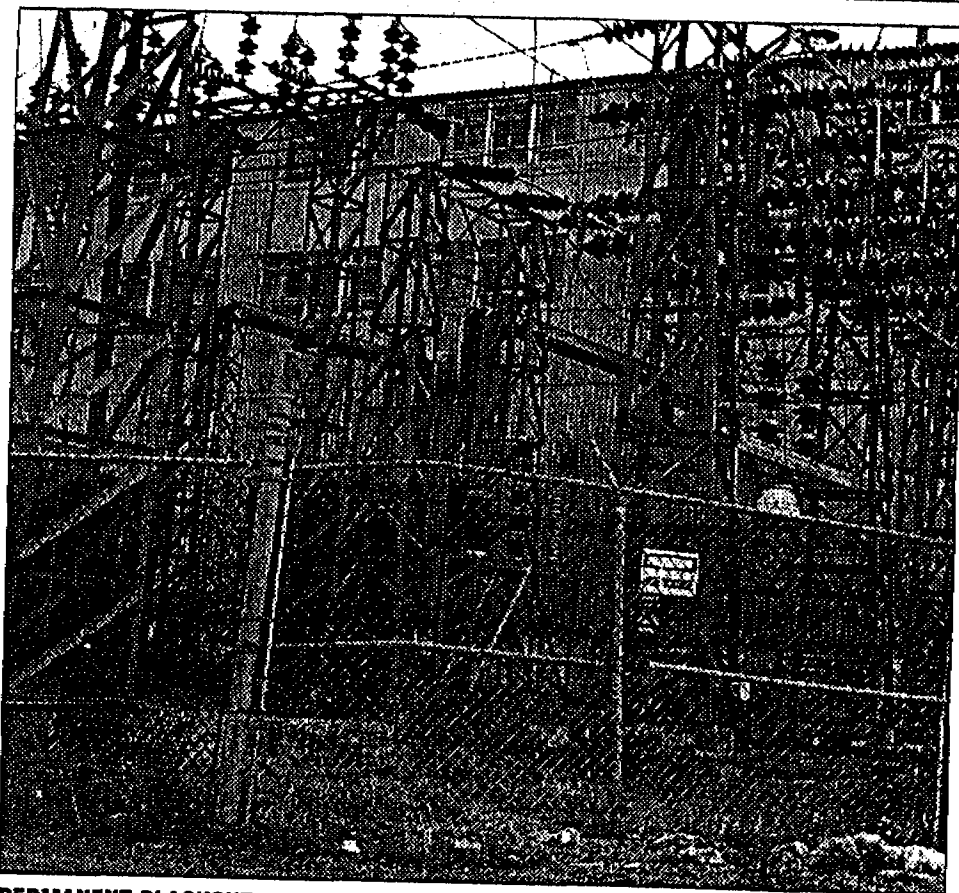
The Public Utilities Board has given the company the approval to remove the giant green building and smoke stack. As well,

the power sub-station will be carted away, which Tucker notes has no live wires at present. The power generating station has not produced electricity for at least 10 years, she adds.

With the board's approval in place, the company must now go through the regular channels at city hall and Confederation Building. Tucker says the company foresees no problems at the municipal or provincial level for this plan.

A contractor has already been hired and is hoped to start work in the next few weeks. Tucker notes the entire site will be fenced-off while work is being done for safety considerations. Some work has been done inside, but a majority of the demolition is yet to come.

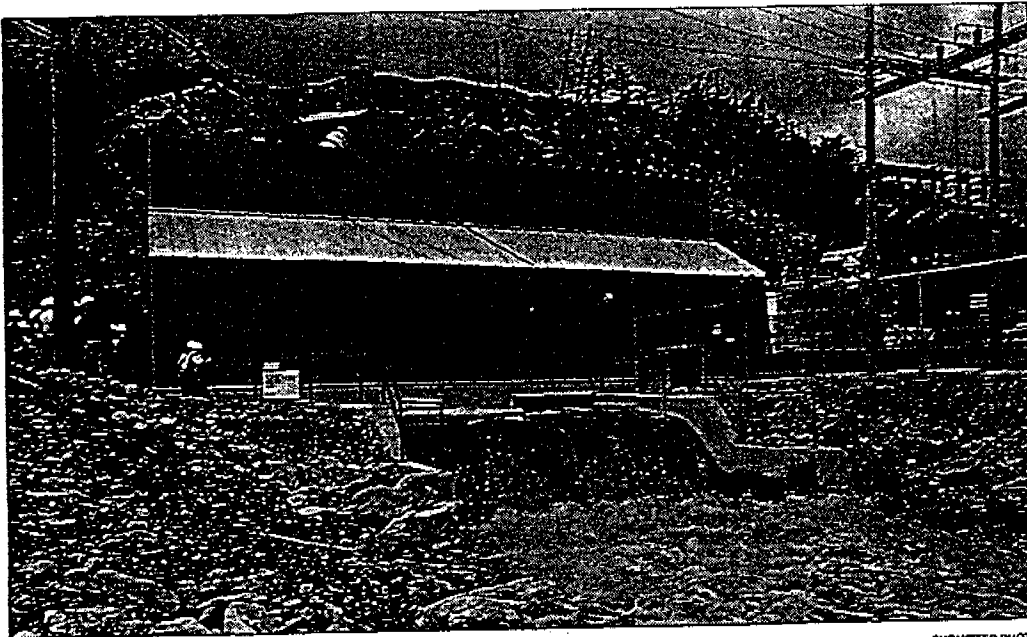
When it was first announced Newfoundland Power was retiring the station for good, the idea of using the building for other purposes was brought up. Tucker says the company did consider possible uses, but the state of building eliminated such ideas from seeing the light of day.



PERMANENT BLACKOUT — The Newfoundland Power generating station on Southside Road is to be demolished this fall. The facility, built in 1956, has not produced electricity in 10 years.

BUSINESS

Wednesday, August 11, 1999, Page 37



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Newfoundland Power's new hydroelectric plant at Rose Blanche, on the province's southwest coast, shown with the tailrace in front, was officially opened Tuesday. The

6.1-megawatt facility was built at a cost of \$13.8 million. Part of the 1,300-metre long penstock can be seen in back of the building.

HYDRO POWER

Rose Blanche plant will cut greenhouse gas emissions

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced in the province as the result of the new \$13.8-million, 6.1-megawatt hydroelectric plant in Rose Blanche on the southwest coast, according to the president and chief executive officer of Newfoundland Power.

The facility at Rose Blanche, approximately 42 kilometres east of Port aux Basques, will displace approximately 38,000 barrels of oil annually, Philip Hughes said at the official opening Tuesday.

He and Energy Minister Roger Grimes declared the plant opened and Mayor Clayton Harris of Rose Blanche also participated in the ceremonies.

"This hydro plant will address reliability concerns for customers from Rose Blanche to Port aux Basques and surrounding areas that have long challenged our company," Hughes said.

The Port aux Basques area is served by a long series of transmission lines

"The project provides a renewable energy source and the solutions we have been searching for at a competitive price."

*Philip Hughes
CEO Newfoundland Power*

which are about 185 kilometres in length.

"These lines go through an area which is subject to some of the harshest weather conditions in the province," Hughes said.

"For this reason, an additional source of generation in the area was needed to provide enhanced security and reliability of power supply," he said.

"The project provides a renewable energy source and the solutions we have been searching for at a competitive price."

Hughes also said more than \$1 million of the project cost was invested in

environmental assessments and enhancements of the Rose Blanche ecosystem and the design of the plant.

"By working in partnership with provincial and federal environment and fisheries groups, Newfoundland Power has incorporated features such as fishways, a habitat compensation channel and a minimum stream flow to support fish populations in the Rose Blanche Brook."

Grimes congratulated Newfoundland Power for its project efficiency and investment in environmental measures.

"This new hydro generating plant will add tremendous benefits to the Rose Blanche to Port aux Basques area," Grimes said.

Hughes noted construction of the facility, which took about 18 months, followed six years of study and planning.

All but one of the contractors hired for the project were from Newfoundland and, with 80 construction workers at peak, a total of 100 person-years of employment was provided.

The plant is the first power generation construction project for Newfoundland Power in 14 years.

Rose Blanche hydro plant open

Provincial Mines and Energy Minister Roger Grimes and Newfoundland Power President and Chief Executive Officer Philip Hughes, officially opened the province's newest hydroelectric plant in Rose Blanche Tuesday.

The Rose Blanche hydro generating plant was constructed over a 16 month period, costing \$13.8 million—over \$1 million of which was dedicated to environmental planning. Approximately 100 jobs were created throughout the plant's construction process.

"In addition to providing customers on the southwest coast of Newfoundland with enhanced reliability, the Rose Blanche plant will displace 38,000 barrels of oil annually," said Mr. Hughes. "This will



Rose Blanche Hydro Plant

assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in our province."

For several years Newfoundland Power has been

working to address reliability challenges in Port aux Basques and surrounding areas. "The Rose Blanche project provides

Newfoundland Power photo

a renewable energy source and the solutions we have been searching for at a competitive price," explained Hughes.

Minister Grimes congratulated Newfoundland Power at the opening for its project efficiency and investment in environment measures.

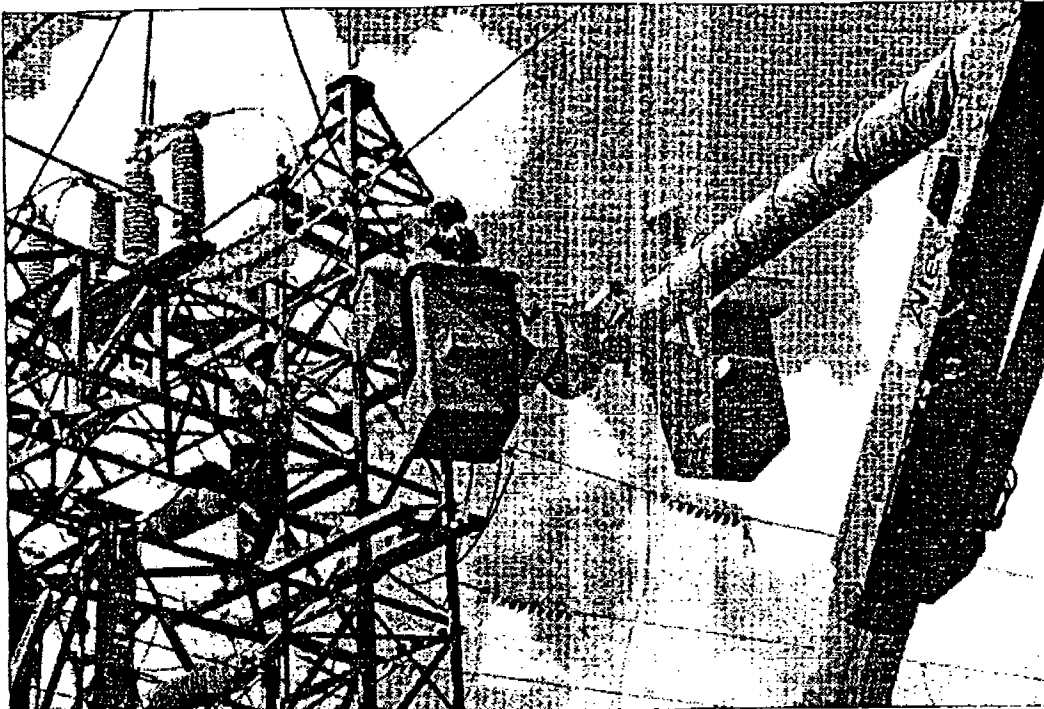
"This new hydro generating plant will add tremendous benefits to Rose Blanche and to the Port aux Basques area," said Minister Grimes.

"I congratulate Newfoundland Power on this major milestone in energy development for this part of our province."

The development of the Rose Blanche hydroelectric project will be featured in an upcoming issue of Electricity Today.

The Star/News - Aug 16/99

THE GULF NEWS, PORT AUX BASQUES, Nfld., MONDAY, AUG. 16, 1999 SECTION A PAGE 5



Working in the steel structure, replacing insulators at the Grand Bay substation is company worker Scott Young, in the

buckets are Jim Chaisson and Tom Warren.

NF Power promises less power outages

By MANDY RYAN
The Gulf News

Short-term pain for long-term gain.

That's how Newfoundland Power's communications officer, Bob Pike describes the recent power outages the area has experienced over the last couple of weeks.

The company is taking on a large project, one that's costing them about \$250,000, to get rid of faulty insulators in the Grand Bay substation. They were discovered about two years ago.

"There's a type of insulator (used in different areas of the province) that was cracking over the years, so we decided that we would do a project to change so many per year. Grand Bay was one of the first ones because it's the main substation that Newfoundland Power has on the south west coast," explained local manager Roddy Duffy.

The defective insulators cause faults on power lines which cause flashes and sometimes explosions, where the insulators shatter and the power lines ground out, knocking electrical power out of people's homes.

In order to change the insulators, the substation had to be de-energized because linespeople can't do the work while power is running. The power was turned off while workers replaced the imperfect insulators with new, more dependable ones.

The first day of work, area homes went without power for three-and-a-half hours. For the next consecutive four business days, it was off again for about 10 minutes each time.

As for outages due to repair work, no more are expected. The crew who had the task of replacing the insulators have the job completed.

Although the flawed insulators were detected two years ago, they've been in place at the substation for 17 years and have never given the company

any problems. Mr. Duffy said the company knew they could start acting up at any time, so replacing them was the only option. What's ironic, he said, was one day before work was scheduled to begin at the Grand Bay location, the first one exploded, knocking out power for over three hours.

This project, in cooperation with the Rose Blanche hydro project—which was officially opened Tuesday—is expected to reduce the incidents of power outages in the area significantly.

The Telegram

Saturday, August 21, 1999

Utility checks out online billing

Newfoundland Power has teamed up with the Royal Bank in a national electronic billing pilot program.

This fall, 50 Newfoundland Power employees will take part in the project, receiving and paying their power bills over the Internet.

If the project is successful, Newfoundland Power customers could be able to use the service as early as next year.

"Newfoundland Power is proud to be one of the first utilities in Canada to take part in such a project," company chief financial officer Karl Smith said.

"In addition to the anticipated benefits for customers, electronic billing has great potential for companies like Newfoundland Power to achieve cost savings in bill processing."

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Saturday

Sept 25/99

NEWS IN BRIEF

PROVINCE

Winds down power lines

A 100-kilometre-per-hour wind storm caused power outages and wreaked havoc with traffic lights around St. John's and the Burin Peninsula in the early hours Friday morning.

Bob Pike, spokesman for Newfoundland Power said a transmission line went down on the Burin Peninsula, putting 2,000 customers in the dark for four to five hours.

Power lines also went down in St. Philip's and St. John's for a few hours, affecting 2,500 customers.

The company also worked to fix hundreds of individual power problems.

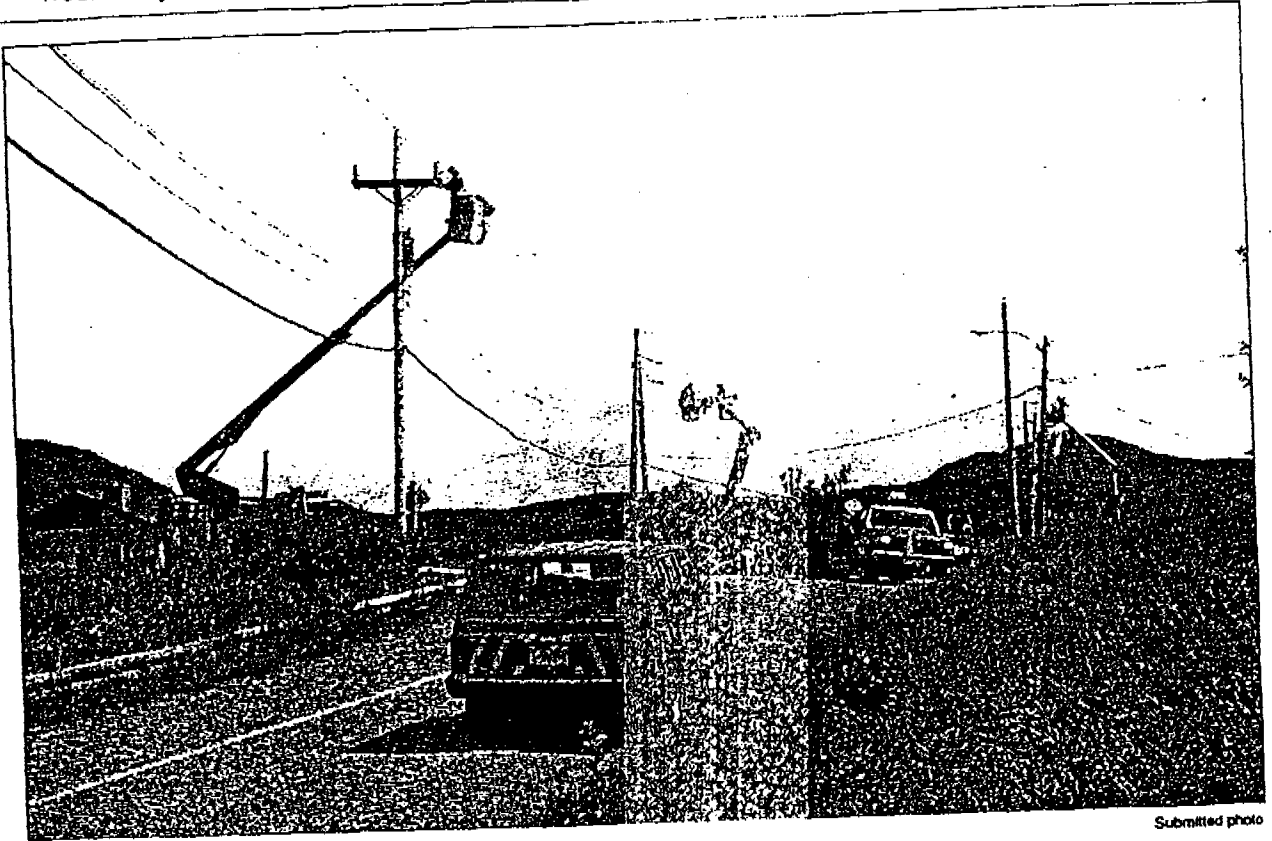
Meanwhile, City of St. John's crews were out Friday fixing nearly a dozen traffic lights that came unhooked and were dangling from safety chains.

Trees were cracked off or uprooted all over the city, many in Bowring Park.

The Western Star

REGIONAL/PRO

Wednesday, September 29, 1999



Newfoundland Power is in the process of rebuilding the electrical system in the Lark Harbour and York Harbour area. The project was initiated to stabilize the

system in an area that experiences frequent power outages due to inclement weather.

Improved power service for Lark Harbour, York Harbour

LARK HARBOUR

The winds will continue to howl, but the electrical system at the mouth of the Bay of Islands should be better equipped to withstand anything Mother Nature throws at it.

Service reliability for Newfoundland Power customers in Lark Harbour and York Harbour, an area renowned for high winds and severe weather, is being improved with a major upgrade of the electrical system.

"In 1999, in excess of one half million dollars will be spent in this area to upgrade poles, insulators and the

Frenchman's Cove substation," said Verbon Hewlin, Newfoundland Power's manager on the west coast. "This area has had more than its share of power outages, due in large part to the harshness of the environment."

"We are upgrading the electrical equipment to better withstand the elements and improve reliability for our customers."

The Lark Harbour and York Harbour reliability project is one of a number of system upgrade projects being carried out by Newfoundland Power this year. Eight crews, which include staff from Stephenville, Corner Brook and Grand Falls-Windsor, have been working in

the area since early August. About 100 new poles and 1,300 new insulators were installed along the 21-kilometre main power line that serves 660 customers.

"The main distribution line was completely redesigned by our engineering staff to meet the wind conditions of this area," said Hewlin. "We are confident that customers will see fewer weather-related outages as a result of these system improvements."

The Lark Harbour and York Harbour upgrade is part of Newfoundland Power's preventive maintenance program. The company's capital spending for 1999 is around \$39.9 million.

Advertiser Oct 8/99

Nfld Power spends thousands fixing outage problem

By MICHELLE HICKS
Advertiser

Newfoundland Power customers from Northern Arm to Leading Tickles and Fortune Harbour should notice an improvement in their electrical service starting today, Oct. 28.

Arrangement were made over the past few weeks to have line crews from Port aux Basques to the Avalon come to the Exploits Valley to complete a major job on power lines.

Bruce Oldford, superintendent at Newfoundland Power's branch in Grand Falls-Windsor, explained that the local office decided some time ago that a lot of work was needed on the line that serves customers in the Northern Arm area.

"We've identified that there's a type of insulator that was used when that line was built that has been giving problems over the last few years," said Mr. Oldford. "It's defective. I guess it's something with the workmanship when it was manufactured.

It's causing unscheduled outages, and it's to the point where we're finding an unacceptable level of service for our customers in that area."

Since the crews started this past Monday, there were several scheduled power interruptions Tuesday and Wednesday affecting several portions of the Northern Arm/Leading Tickles/Fortune Harbour area.

The 75 employees have worked lengthy hours to replace nearly 1,000 insulators.

"It was quite an effort to get all this co-ordinated and brought together, but the end result is that we're hoping the customers in that area will have a much more reliable supply of electricity," said Mr. Oldford.

Replacing the insulators has cost Newfoundland Power nearly \$75,000-\$80,000. As well, the company carried out brush cutting operations in the same area to clear the brush and reduce problems with trees falling across the lines at an additional cost of \$20,000.

Thursday, Oct-14/99

Y2K drills successful

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and Newfoundland Power didn't have a hitch last week when they conducted a Y2K drill to test their ability to provide electricity and to communicate with their customers.

Don Barrett of Hydro and Bob Pike of Newfoundland Power said the drill was a great opportunity for employees of both utility companies to prepare in the event of year 2000 difficulties at the stroke of midnight on Dec. 31.

The drill consisted of various scenarios to test the utilities' ability to manually maintain and operate the provincial electrical system and to provide information to customers in the event of system and communication failures at the start of 2000.

Both utilities have undergone extensive reviews of their systems to ensure their equipment is ready for the year 2000.

Good night Irene

Storm results in power outages, wet snow on west coast

CORNER BROOK

The tall end of Hurricane Irene can be thanked for high winds, rain and heavy, wet snow that besieged western Newfoundland late Monday night and early Tuesday.

Despite the unexpected twist in the weather, there were no major incidents reported, although there were widespread power outages around Port aux Basques, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Green Bay and Twillingate. The storm dumped snow on parts of central and western Newfoundland, and wind warnings remained in effect Tuesday for the Avalon and Bonaville peninsulas.

A spokesperson for Newfoundland Power said crews were out repairing electrical lines that had been brought down by wind or tree branches that had cracked off due to wind or the heavy snow. He said workers who had started on the problems at 2 a.m. were out until 10 a.m. the next morning.

Downed power lines weren't the only problem facing west coast residents. Allan Miller, NewTel Communications' western Newfoundland and Labrador general manager, said the winds and snow of the past few days contributed to a higher than normal number of troubles with telephone service as well.

"We have doubled the number of out-of-service troubles that we usually have," said Miller. "We're responsible for a large geographical area. Port aux Basques seemed to be the hardest hit. The winds out there have been very high."

Although there was no major damage reported to the phone system, Miller said the quantity of damage has caused slight delays in power restoration and compelled the telephone company to respond to the most urgent cases first.

The winds also disrupted ferry crossings between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The Joseph and Clara Smallwood did not leave

North Sydney Monday night and was rescheduled to leave Tuesday morning. It arrived in Port aux Basques about 2:30 Tuesday afternoon and was not scheduled to depart for Nova Scotia until 6 a.m. this morning.

Meanwhile, city workers could be seen around virtually every corner cleaning up the debris left by the multitude of fallen branches all over Corner Brook.

Charlie Renouf, the city's co-ordinator of works, said residents should check the stability of any large trees on their property. He added it may also be a good idea to check insurance policies to see if they cover damage sustained by fallen trees.

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary reported three accidents during the period of snowfall. All three were minor in nature. The biggest problems were created by a number of cars that had been abandoned by owners who could not progress either because of the snow or downed trees.

The Corner Brook detachment of the RCMP, meanwhile, reported seven collisions during the period. None resulted in major damage or injuries.

Driving conditions were described as treacherous in some areas. The driver of a transport truck reported being held up on the Trans-Canada Highway for more than four hours Tuesday morning, a tractor trailer jack-knifed near Bonne Bay Pond and police also received a report of a truck in Pynn's Brook as a result of the storm.

Also, a woman who was driving toward Baie Verte with her two children called the detachment from Birchby Narrows, when driving became too hazardous for her to continue. Police made arrangements with the Springdale detachment for her to be escorted home.

The Bay St. George detachment of the RCMP said they only had two accidents reported on Monday evening, however, both involved

moose rather than snow. In one there were no injuries but there were two people injured in the other, which occurred near River Brook. Both people were taken to Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital, but their injuries were minor and not life-threatening.

Snowplows and trucks working for the Department of Works, Services and Transportation's highway division in Stephenville and Deer Lake were out in full force, despite also being caught off guard by the surprise snowfall.

The forecast only called for about five centimetres but we had about 25 or 30," said a spokesperson for the Deer Lake office. "We were prepared, though and we were out in full force on the main roads early in the morning."

Deer Lake Deputy Mayor Harold (Smokay) Ball said the town's public works department also didn't have any major problems taking care of wet heavy snow, and no flooding occurred.

However, there was an accident involving a truck and a snow plow belonging to the town. As a result, Ball said the town will now be putting signs on the machines warning vehicles to keep at a distance.

Some people were upset about the plows digging into their lawns though. "There were a few complaints, but you've got to remember, the first few snowfalls you're always going to get a few complaints about plows digging into lawns," said Ball.

"That happens where the ground is not frozen, and our operators have got to use a bit of common sense when it comes to lawns."

Ball said the floating blade can sometimes dig in without the operator having a chance to see what is happening. The department had no substantial delays in getting the equipment out to remove the snow, but Ball said they did have to make some adjustments to the equipment.

Willie MacNeil, manager of Stephenville airport, said they had snow clearing equipment on the runway and taxiways at 3 a.m. to get ahead of the snow and were successful in doing that, with not only



A snowstorm swept through the west coast and central Newfoundland Tuesday leaving some without power for a few hours. Here, Arthur Bennett of Newfoundland Power prunes some damaged branches on trees on the Majestic Lawn.

domestic traffic running on-time, but a diversion from Gander International airport was also handled early Tuesday morning.

At the Deer Lake Regional Airport, manager Rennie Driver said the facility was caught off guard by the snow, but there were no problems on the runway.

"We weren't prepared, but we got

through it," he said. Some flights out of St. John's were delayed, but not because of conditions at the airport. All flights from Deer Lake were on schedule.

The storm also stopped drilling at the Hibernia oil platform for a time. The offshore site saw top sustained winds of 160 kilometres an hour and 18-metre waves.

A yearly test could save your life

Last week may have been Pap Test Awareness Week, however women who didn't get tested then shouldn't wait until this time next year.

A Pap test is a simple, yet very important exam. It can detect changes in cells on the cervix before they become cancer. Regular Pap tests can prevent cancer of the cervix in over 90 per cent of the cases.

There is no charge for a Pap test so the low rates of Newfoundland women hav-

ing them performed regularly is a mystery.

The rate of cervical cancer in this province is 50 per cent higher than the national average. However, screening in Newfoundland remains low - less than 38 per cent of women are having annual Pap tests.

It is recommended that all women who are sexually active have a yearly test.

To find out more about Pap tests call the Cervical Screening Initiatives office at 643-4564, or toll free at 1-888-973-4466.



These Newfoundland Power employees putting up the Pap Test Awareness Week banner may be men, but they know the importance of women having a yearly Pap test.

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Nov 3/99

Newfoundland Power ready for 2000, Rotary told

By JONATHAN SNOW
Star Staff Writer

CORNER BROOK

The transition from 1999 to 2000 will have a major impact, not only on computers, but all systems that operate using a two digit year (99) instead of a four digit year (1999).

When year 2000 occurs, components with '00' programmed as the year may not work, or believe it is the year 1900.

One area which is vital is energy and electricity, and Bob Pike, manager of corporate communications for Newfoundland Power, told the Humber Rotary Club Tuesday about his company's readiness for the upcoming challenge.

Pike said that Newfoundland Power has been preparing for the year 2000 since 1997 and has had a schedule for the process which will ensure the company will be year 2000 compliant.

The process is broken into four phases, starting with the inventory/assessment phase. This is where items are prioritized into three categories based on risk. Priority A include things like the company's customer service system, hand-held metering, and portable transformers.

Priority B items are important to business, but operations would not be adversely affected if they were inoperable for some period of time. Priority C items are minor risks, which can include office building security systems and testing equipment.

Pike said the second phase is repair and test. This is where items are tested and either repaired, upgraded or replaced, and anything new must be year 2000 compliant.

The communication phase is the third phase which is Newfoundland Power keeping their customers updated and informed of the process, as well as many national groups like the Canadian Electricity Association's Year 2000 group, said Pike.

The final phase is contingency planning. He explained that on Oct. 8, in conjunction with Newfoundland Hydro, Newfoundland Power tested their provision of electricity and communications with customers contingency plans. This drill consisted of 24 scenarios to test employees' ability to respond to potential year 2000 failures. All 24 scenarios were executed successfully, with 225 people in position for the drill. This same number will be on duty come Dec. 31.

Pike went on to say that by the third quarter of 1998 all potential items were inventoried and a risk assessment was completed for each item. By the end of the first quarter of 1999, the repair and testing phase had been completed, while the contingency plans were in place by the end of the second quarter of 1999, making Newfoundland Power ready for the new year, though Pike does not guarantee anything, but that they are year 2000 compliant.

The cost of upgrading and becoming year 2000 compliant, according to Pike, was about \$3.8 million.

The Western Star Nov 08/99



Philip Hughes, president and chief executive officer of Newfoundland Power, was the guest speaker at a Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities luncheon at the Canada Games Centre Saturday. Hughes spoke to the 900 delegates from the province's municipalities about the future of Newfoundland Power.

Newfoundland Power committed to improving service, CEO tells convention

By JAMES MATTHEWS
Star Staff Writer

CORNER BROOK

Philip Hughes outlined the commitments of Newfoundland Power Saturday at a luncheon for about 900 delegates attending the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities annual meeting at the Canada Games Centre.

Hughes, the president and chief executive officer of the province's power company, said Newfoundland Power will invest in initiatives that will accelerate their corporate productivity and strive to nurture positive labour relationships with employees.

"What we're trying to do at Newfoundland Power is build on the strengths of our employees," he told *The Western Star* following the luncheon.

"We're trying to use technology, we're trying to use training to deliver the first-class electrical service that we believe our customers deserve and need for us to have a growing economy."

He detailed some of the methods the company will pursue in their commitment to training and development programs that contribute to employee's skills and assist in accelerating the pace of corporate productivity.

To accomplish these goals,

Newfoundland Power has a mentoring program, a computer purchase program, and have offered training to employees in the areas of technical, safety and individual development, according to Hughes.

"What we're doing on the training front is that we have a mentoring program where there is technical and professional development," he said. "We've also put in a new control centre that will control the electrical system right across the island."

"We'll have far more capabilities so outages will be shorter and safety will be improved."

During his speech, Hughes said it's critical that one's services be of the highest value and at a truly competitive price, whether it be Newfoundland Power providing customers with electrical service or municipalities providing residents with essential services.

Though he believes the level of service in Newfoundland is on par with the rest of the country, Hughes said Newfoundland Power will continue to push for improvements.

"When you compare the (electrical) service here compared to the rest of the country, it's very good," he said. "But we think it could be better, and that's despite that fact that this is one of the tougher areas with climate, wind and salt to operate electrical an electrical utility. We always think there's room for improvement."

2000 SUMMER GAMES

UP & AT 'EM

Brian O'Connell, Chairperson of the 2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games Promotions Committee, recently announced a Games Theme Song Promotion, and Bob Hillier, Chairperson of the Games, welcomed three more Gold Partners.

GAMES THEME SONG PROMOTION

The Games Theme Song Promotion is an initiative to involve the public in the creation of a theme song for the 2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, which will take place next August 19th to 26th in the City of Mount Pearl. The public is being asked to submit lyrics for a theme song for the Games. Based on submissions, one or more people will be selected to co-write the theme song with Newfoundland singer/songwriter Damian Follett.

"We are looking for a theme song that is appealing to

youth, who the Games are really for and about. We want it to be current, upbeat, traditional sounding - something that radio stations will feel compelled to play," said Brian O'Connell. "To come up with what we want, the Games Promotions Committee decided that the best route to go would be to have a successful Newfoundland singer/songwriter help us. We approached Damian Follett, and he was excited by the whole idea. We feel very fortunate, lucky and thankful to have Damian."

Damian Follett is a rising Newfoundland singer/songwriter. He is heard on radio stations across the country and featured on Country Music Television. Currently, Damian is on tour with *The Fables*.

The deadline for submissions for the Games Theme Song is Friday, January 21, 2000, and submissions are to

be sent to: Theme Song Promotion, 2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, P.O. Box 989, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland, A1N 3G9. Submissions may also be mailed to info@summergames2000.nfld.net or dropped at the Games office located in the Glacier arena on Drive in Mount Pearl.

"There is no restriction on the age of persons submitting to the Theme Song Promotion," said O'Connell. "The main stipulation is that the song lyric be on the purpose of the Games (which is to bring together in a multi-sport event) and the theme of the *Unity in Youth* (which refers to unity amongst the Games and renewed unity amongst all the people of Newfoundland and Labrador at the turn of the cen-



2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games welcomes three more Gold Partners. From left to right: May Denine, City of Mount Pearl; Mr. Phillip Hughes, President and CEO of Newfoundland Power; Bob Hillier, Chairperson 2000 Summer Games; Mr. Dennis Dillon, Marketing Coordinator of Dominion; Mr. Robert Lethbridge, Senior Merchandising of Dominion; and Mr. Terry MacDonald, General Manager of North Atlantic Petroleum.

GOLD PARTNERS WELCOMED

Chairperson of the 2000 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, Mr. Bob Hillier, claims that things like the Theme Song Promotion within the Games and the Games in general would not be achieved with the greatest degree of success without the contributions of gold partners, meaning major corporate sponsors making contributions worth \$25,000 or more.

"The Host Committee, the youth of the Games, and all the people of the province can be thankful for an overwhelming display of generosity by our gold partners," said Bob Hillier. "And, I am pleased and excited to say that three more Newfoundland companies are now generously supporting the Games with minimum contributions of \$25,000."

Newfoundland Power contributing: the operation of the Shuttle Bus Service for the athletes and coaches during the Games; the use of the organization's unique pavilion during the Games, which consists of three large "carnival style" tents, to create a central area in the Athletes Village where the athletes can mix and mingle and souvenir stands and fast food vendors can surround for the enjoyment of athletes and others; and the production and distribution of a promotional brochure through its customer billing system in May 2000.

Hillier commented, "Newfoundland Power has accepted the challenge of providing a shuttle bus service to all venues for the athletes participating in the Games. Our plans call for a bus stopping at each venue every ten minutes. With this type of system in place we should be operating the Newfoundland Power Shuttle Bus Service at a level second to none."

North Atlantic Petroleum contributing: fuel and gas for the vehicles to be used during the Games next August; fuel and gas for the vehicles to be used on the promotional tour of the province next May; fuel and gas for the Games car currently in use; propane to fuel the flame of the Games torch; and the competitive uniforms for all the athletes from the Host Community - the City of Mount Pearl.

Hillier had this to say about North Atlantic Petroleum. "What more can I say we will have upwards of 20 Games vehicles in operation next summer for the every one of them will be running on fuel refined right here in our province. Not Petroleum was an obvious choice for us in approaching an oil company. They committed to seeing all of the athletes from Mount Pearl dressed in attractive forms. For those things, we are most appreciative."

Dominion Stores contributing: all groceries to feed the athletes and coaches the Games; film and processing for the 2000 Summer Games Photographer Games; food requirements for various functions during and immediately following the Games such as the "volunteer recognition" parties at the end of the Games requirements for various functions leading up to the Games.

"In total, this is an outstanding contribution to the Games by Dominion at least," Hillier commented. "The groceries for the athletes and coaches of the Games is enormous, given the fact that the Games will involve approximately 2000 people total. Let me try to put this in perspective by saying that some of the larger items for breakfast alone include: 300 pounds of bacon, 9600 loaves of bread, 8000 and 3200 litres of juice. I mean what can you say to that other than WOW."

At a special reception held recently to welcome Newfoundland Power, North Atlantic Petroleum and Dominion, Mr. Hillier also acknowledged other gold partners already have received formal welcome and those that will be formally welcomed date - including: Capital Motors, Robinson Blackmore, The Hub, VOICM, Harvey, and NewTel.

Currently, there are nine gold partners in the 2000 Summer Games. This is according to Bob Hillier. He said: "Our goal was to have 10 gold partners before 1999. I am proud to say that it looks like we will achieve our goal."

COMMUNITY NEWS

NewTel Pioneers garners three international awards

By NATASHA CARBERRY
Advertiser

Chapter 105 of the NewTel Pioneers, representing Newfoundland and Labrador, recently received three international awards during the annual meeting of the Telephone Pioneers of America in New Orleans.

The chapter received three Heart of Pioneering Awards for meeting high standards of excellence in projects key to meeting the goals of the organization, including, Computers for Schools; the Hug-a-Bear program, and the Heart Pillows project.

Don Baker, president of Chapter 105, said the international recognition is a boost to a provincial organization that boasts 1,600 members; logged 35,000 hours of volunteer time in 1998 alone; and reached more than \$500,000 in financial contributions or donations in kind.

"The three projects we were recognized for are the cornerstone of our provincial program," said Mr. Baker.

In the area of education, the NewTel Pioneers were

recognized with an award for Computers for Schools. The program, run in partnership with Industry Canada, donated 1,703 computers to schools across the province last year.

Working with the RCMP, RNC, St. John Ambulance and other groups, the Pioneers made and distributed 1,455 Hug-a-Bears to assist children traumatized by crises caused by fires, accidents, and domestic violence.

They also made and distributed 900 Heart Pillows to patients recovering from open heart surgery. These pillows are designed to provide comfort to patients after surgery.

Mr. Baker added the programs that have garnered the chapter international recognition are also ones he firmly believes in, and he is encouraged by their apparent impact on an international level.

"It is great to be recognized and know that the hours you put into your projects and the time that you log have resulted in an international award," he said. "It is a great feeling. Our motto is 'to answer the call of those

in need,' and it is encouraging to feel that we're moving in the right direction, and we're able to make a difference."

Local reaction

When Bob King, president of the Exploits branch of the NewTel Pioneers, heard about the award he said he was proud of his organization and pleased to have played a role in its overall success.

"I got involved with the NewTel Pioneers 20 years ago because of the tremendous work that they do in the community," he said. "Last year alone, we distributed 50 computers over a 10-month period, and next week we're expecting an additional 50 units. We just donated 11 to Avoca Collegiate in Badger, and we're told the kids really excited about them."

"We have 42 members in the Exploits club, and we are proud to be part of a group that has just received international recognition for their efforts," added Mr. King. "It is certainly incentive to strive harder over the next few years to do even better."

Newfoundland Power recognized

Newfoundland Power was recently awarded the prestigious Certificate of Special Recognition by the Canadian Cancer Society.

This national award is presented to organizations that have made exceptional contributions to the Canadian Cancer Society and its mission.

"The efforts and generosity of Newfoundland Power have significantly contributed to the society's mission to eradicate cancer and enhance the quality

of life of those living with cancer," says Fred Constantine, president, Canadian Cancer Society, Newfoundland and Labrador Division.

The award was presented in honour of Newfoundland Power's Families Can Beat Cancer campaign with the Canadian Cancer Society, Newfoundland and Labrador Division, that was the first of its kinds in Canada. Through its partnership, Newfoundland Power contributes cash and in-kind services, such as print-

ing and distribution of public education and cancer awareness materials. In addition, the company provides customers with the opportunity to donate to the Canadian Cancer Society through its billing system.

Approximately \$200,000 has been raised in less than two years through the generosity of Newfoundland Power and its customers to improve the lives of Newfoundlanders living with cancer.

Pole attachments focus of PUB hearing

ST. JOHN'S — The battle between a small rural community-based cable television company and Newfoundland Power over conditions for pole attachments will be the focus of a Public Utilities Board (PUB) hearing.

The utility is asking the board to make Glovertown Cable TV Ltd. a party to an agreement signed earlier with other cable firms in the province for a uniform rate for space on poles to attach their cables.

However, the cable company says it has serious concerns about the agreement, particularly a section which would give the utility the right to cut off Glovertown Cable TV's power, even if its account is paid up to date, every time there is a dispute over pole attachments. The PUB has announced that a pre-hearing conference to determine such things as the hearing dates, who will be given intervener status and other procedural details will begin at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday at the hearings room of the board's offices in the Prince Charles building, Torbay Road.

It is one of three hearings starting this week.

The PUB will begin a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. Friday into a Newfoundland Power application for approval of the company's 2000 capital budget and approval of leases for

2000 in excess of \$5,000 per year.

At the same time, under an automatic formula process implemented last year, the board will set electricity rates for 2000.

Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate communications, said Monday that while it is possible a formula-based rate increased could be implemented, "any change would likely be marginal."

With regard to the hearing on the pole attachment dispute, Pike said the agreement with the other cable companies has been approved by the PUB but Glovertown Cable has not agreed to the contract and is refusing to go along with it. However, Terry Burry of Glovertown Cable TV, said Monday the contentious section of the agreement would "give them a right they never had before and that doesn't exist anywhere else in Canada, I understand."

Burry said when his company was asked to sign the agreement, he asked for some changes in it, such as this section, for example but he was told the contract could not be changed.

The Glovertown company has other concerns as well.

Burry said he feels it is unfair for Newfoundland Power to collect the pole attachment rate on a per pole basis rather than on a per customer

basis.

He said it was the utility which put the poles in place but it only derives about one per cent of its revenue from the poles with the rest of its revenue being collected on a per customer basis. "We have to pay on a per pole basis even when our cable is running past businesses, for example, who don't take cable service, in order to get to customers."

In addition, Burry said, the cable company uses only a small space on the 40-foot poles but have to pay one third of the cost. He also pointed out that Newfoundland Power is a monopoly whereas the cable company has to compete with the direct-to-home satellite services which don't have to use the pole space.

Westminster Nov 16, 1999

Upgrade to blame for recent power outages

By GARY KEAN
Star Staff Writer

CORNER BROOK

Newfoundland Power says there are a number of reasons for a string of recent power outages in the west end of the city.

Momentary losses of electricity have been reported throughout the area serviced by the Walbourne's Road substation. The Walbourne's Road substation covers a large chunk of the Corner Brook vicinity, including the Elizabeth Street, O'Connell Drive, Mount Bernard Avenue, Caribou Road, Country Road, Sunnyslope Drive areas. It also includes all of Curling and as far down the south shore of the Humber Arm as Halfway Point, which gets its power from a substation in

Frenchman's Cove.

Dave Manning, superintendent of area operations, said that the main causes of power outages in those areas have to do with the nature of the island's power grid and the fact that Newfoundland Power has been doing some upgrading of equipment at the Walbourne's Road substation.

"The latest outages have been underfrequency trips at Walbourne's Road," said Manning. "Because we're on an island grid and not connected to the North American grid, we have to have underfrequency tripping on certain subs.

"We have to be careful about balancing the load to the generation. If Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro loses generation at Bay d'Espoir or somewhere else for whatever reason, then that sudden drop in capacity means

we have to drop a load somewhere."

Without such a backup system, the loss of a large portion of generation at a major source like Bay d'Espoir without compensation could mean the loss of power on the whole island, said Manning. The backup scheme includes identifying certain substations across the island which would be dropped from the grid whenever there is an imbalance of power. The list of sites that will experience an underfrequency trip rotates about every one to two years. The Walbourne's Road substation happens to be on the trip list at the moment and will be rotated sometime in the next year.

"We try to spread those underfrequency outages to all our customers across the company," explained Manning. "Right now, Walbourne's substation is on the scheme. They'll

have a turn and then we'll block that and it will be turned on at another substation."

There are exceptions to the scheme. Manning said arrangements have been made with the Canada Games Centre that will allow an individual blockage of the trip, thereby allowing the feeder providing power to the stadium to continue to do so. Manning said this is done only when there are major functions at the civic centre.

In addition to being subjected to trips, Newfoundland Power has also been replacing underground cables on one of the substation's feeders.

"There has been some switching involved there that may have caused a few outages in the area," said Manning. "Again, they wouldn't be extended outages. They would probably be about five minutes or so."

Western Star Nov 17/99

Thursday Nov 18/99

Cable firm gets time to prepare case against power utility

BY PAT DOYLE
The Telegram

A central Newfoundland cable television company says Newfoundland Power should not be allowed to use the Supreme Court to improve its bargaining position in a dispute with the firm over pole attachment compensation.

Glovertown Cable TV Ltd. made the comment in a statement of defence filed with the court last week in response to an earlier statement of claim by the utility, which is seeking compensation for use of space on its poles to attach cables.

The court dispute comes as the Public Utilities Board (PUB) is beginning to deal with the issue.

The first step took place Wednesday toward a PUB public hearing on a Newfoundland Power application to have Glovertown Cable become party to an agreement for such compensation. The utility has compensation plans in place with nine other cable TV companies.

At a brief pre-hearing conference Wednesday, the matter was adjourned to allow Glovertown Cable time to file for intervenor status at the hearing.

A date for the start of the hearing will be set later by the board, but it appears likely sessions will begin early in the new year.

However, Glovertown Cable pointed out in its statement of defence that just five days after Newfoundland Power filed its application with the PUB, the utility filed its claim with the Supreme Court.

On that basis, said the cable TV firm, the utility's statement of claim is "untimely and is an attempt by the plaintiff to place undue pressure on the defendant to settle the outstanding issues" between them and to "deprive"

the company from making representations before the PUB on these issues.

Glovertown Cable also raised the issue of jurisdiction in its statement, claiming it is a matter that is under the jurisdiction of the PUB, or alternatively, the Canadian Radio-Television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). Therefore, the court does not have jurisdiction to make any order with regard to the statement of claim, the company added.

The Glovertown firm said it will be asking that the utility's claim be dismissed.

Newfoundland Power's statement of claim said that although the cable company has been using the poles, is obligated to pay compensation and has been billed for such usage, it has not paid any compensation since April 1995.

The cable company has "wrongfully" and contrary to the Public Utilities Act, the Pole Attachment Rate Order and a PUB order, failed to make the payments it is obligated to make, the utility stated. However, the cable company has denied that is the case, stating the attachment rate order and PUB order "have no application" to this litigation.

Newfoundland Power is seeking a court order for the cable firm to pay \$27,763.34 in arrears plus interest of \$8,983.28, the amounts it claims it is owed as of Oct. 1, 1999.

In its statement, Glovertown Cable admitted it has not paid any compensation since April 1995 but claims it is not liable for the amounts being claimed.

Glovertown Cable said it has taken exception to a number of issues concerning the agreement between Newfoundland Power and the other cable operators and intends to make representation on them before the PUB.

Slight increase in electricity rates possible: Newfoundland Power

There may be a slight hike in electricity rates for next year under an automatic adjustment formula, says Newfoundland Power.

The formula was put in place last year by the Public Utilities Board (PUB) to reflect changes in long-term interest rates.

Under the mechanism, the board will set the new rates following a public hearing in Newfoundland Power's proposed capital budget for next year.

The utility's application also provided the PUB with data for its consideration in applying the formula.

"An increase in 1999 long-term interest rates, combined with an increase in capital investment, may result in an adjustment of less than one per cent based on the automatic formula for 2000," said Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate communications.

"This is equal to an increase of ap-

"This is equal to an increase of approximately 68 cents on an average monthly residential electric bill."

*Bob Pike, manager
corporate communications*

proximately 68 cents on an average monthly residential electric bill," Pike said.

He said the formula resulted in a 2.1 per cent reduction in rates to customers in 1998 due to low interest rates.

It is expected the PUB will announce the electrical rates for 2000 sometime within the next few weeks.

Newfoundland Power's capital budget for 2000 is approximately \$42 million.

"These expenditures are directly

related to safety, reliability, customer service and productivity initiatives and the replacement of aging and deteriorated equipment," Pike said.

Meanwhile, Newfoundland Power released a comparison of electric rates Friday which showed that a sample residential bill — 1,218 kilowatt hours (kwh) per month — in St. John's, excluding taxes, is \$98.43.

That compares to \$112.20 in Halifax; \$110.79 in Charlottetown, P.E.I.; \$100.76 in Fredericton; and \$108.58 in Toronto.

The St. John's, Halifax and Fredericton rates are subject to the 15 per cent HST while the other two rates are subject to the seven per cent GST.

The average all-electric residential bill (1,648 kwh per month), excluding taxes, is \$127.51 in St. John's; \$148.13 in Halifax; \$136.89 in Charlottetown; \$124.50 in Fredericton; and \$143.76 in Toronto.

Power rates could rise

There may be a slight hike in electricity rates for next year under an automatic adjustment formula, Newfoundland Power said Friday.

The formula was put in place last year by the Public Utilities Board (PUB) to reflect changes in long-term interest rates. The board will set the new rates, following a public hearing Friday, in Newfoundland Power's proposed capital budget for next year.

The utility's application also provided the PUB with data for its consideration in applying the formula.

"An increase in 1999 long-term interest rates, combined with an increase in capital investment, may result in an adjustment of less than one per cent," said Bob Pike, Newfoundland Power's manager of corporate communications.

"This is equal to an increase of approximately 68 cents on an average monthly residential electric bill," Pike said. He said the formula resulted in a 2.1 per cent reduction in rates in 1998 due to low interest rates.

PUB will announce the rates for 2000 within the next few weeks.

Nov 20 1999

The Western Star

Newfoundland Power files 2000 capital budget

Newfoundland Power filed its 2000 capital budget with the Newfoundland and Labrador Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (PUB) Friday.

"Our proposed capital budget for 2000 is approximately \$42 million," said Bob Pike, manager, corporate communications. "These expenditures are directly related to safety, reliability, customer service and productivity initiatives, and the replacement of aging and deteriorated equipment."

"Newfoundland Power is committed to investing capital in a manner that provides the greatest increase in reliability and the greatest reduction in operating and maintenance costs over the long-

term," he added.

In the hearing, PUB will set electrical rates for 2000 based on the automatic adjustment formula it established in 1998.

The automatic adjustment formula, which was put in place by the PUB to reflect changes in long-term interest rates, resulted in a 2.1 per cent reduction in rates to customers in 1998 due to low interest rates.

An increase in 1999 long-term interest rates, combined with an increase in capital investment, may result in an adjustment of less than 1.0 per cent based on the automatic formula for 2000. This is equal to an increase of approximately 68 cents on an average monthly residential electric bill.

Advertiser Nov 22/99

Tuesday, November 30, 1999

BRI

Transformer cause of power outage

CORNER BROOK

A Newfoundland Power crew was busy all Monday afternoon trying to restore power in the Brookfield Avenue area.

It took workers until about 5:45 p.m., more than five hours after the power outage began, to determine the cause of the outage and correct the problem. Dave Manning of Newfoundland Power said the transformer located on Brookfield Avenue wasn't functioning properly.

"That happens from time to time as a result of either the distribution transformer becomes overloaded, or lightning or fault internal to the transformer," said Manning, who is the company's superintendent of area operations.

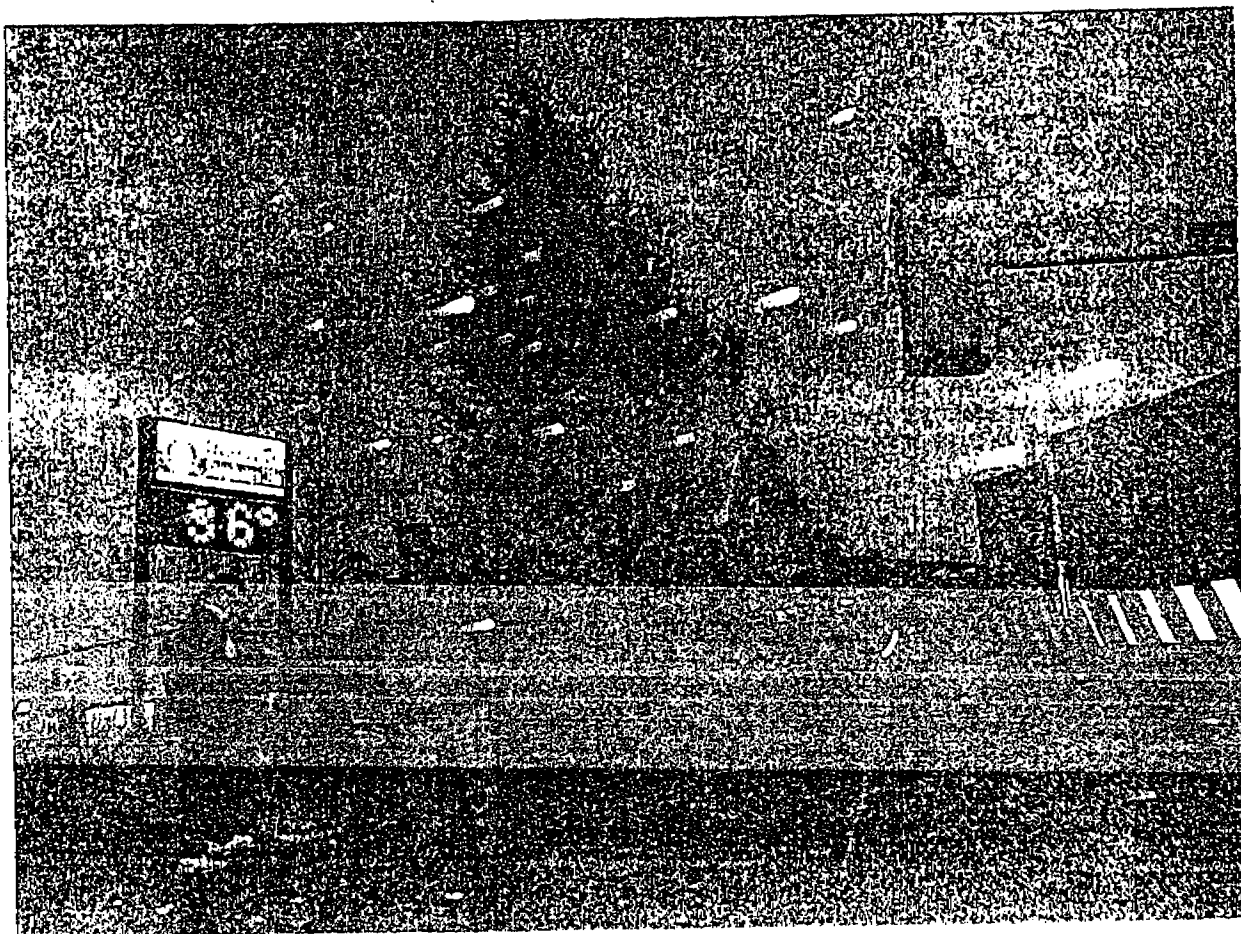
"The problem is that this particular transformer is a fairly large transformer and it takes a little bit more time to replace. As well, it's located in such a place that it's difficult to get to with our truck."

Newfoundland Power received a complaint around 12:30 p.m. stating that the power was gone. By 1 p.m. a service crew responded to the call and, after assessing the situation, they determined that the transformer needed to be replaced.

"The crew that we would require to replace that transformer were working down in Frenchman's Cove at the time so they had to be called back from there," he said.

A community effort

Organizers say the erection of a town tree in Stephenville was a true community project. Abitibi-Consolidated provided the tree, the Town of Stephenville dug the hole and planted the base for it, Newfoundland Power put it up and the Canadian Progress Club-Bay St. George partnered with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) to provide and decorate the tree with lights. Here, Dale Bursey and Alex Pilgrim of the Progress Club, and Bob Byrnes of the BIA, sort out anchor ropes; while Jim Chaisson of Newfoundland Power (in bucket) prepares to straighten up the tree after lifting it into its base. An official lighting of the tree will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, at which time the continuation of a food drive by the Progress Club from the morning parade will take place. Items will be accepted during the parade and at the tree lighting.



File written Nov 2, 1999

Number Log Dec 22/99

PUB approves Newfoundland Power's capital budget

The Newfoundland and Labrador Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (PUB) has approved Newfoundland Power Inc.'s 2000 capital budget of approximately \$42 million.

"The PUB's approval of our 2000 capital budget enables Newfoundland Power to make the necessary investment in the electrical system to continue to meet customer's expectations," says Philip Hughes, president and chief executive officer, Newfoundland Power.

In addition, the PUB granted a 0.7 per cent increase in rates for Newfoundland Power as a result of the application of an automatic adjustment mechanism approved by the PUB in 1998. The increase will be effective Jan. 1, 2000.

"The operation of the automatic adjustment formula has allowed for an efficient adjustment in electricity rates," says Hughes. "We are pleased that the formula has responded as intended to changes in market conditions and Newfoundland Power's business."

An allowed rate of return on equity of 9.59 per cent was used to establish Newfoundland Power's 2000 rate.

FIVE DAYS LEFT

Service providers claim Y2K compliance

By MANDY RYAN
The Gulf News

It seems there's no reason to worry about Y2K.

According to the police, Newfoundland Power and the hospital, all major services that people depend on for day-to-day living have beat the clock and eliminated the dreaded computer bug from their operations before it has a chance to bite.

The Y2K computer problem was created by human error. When building computer programs in the past, some programmers deleted the century digits, i.e. the 19 in 1999;

as a way to save space and computer memory.

The fear is, for those computers and computer chips that don't have the century digits, the last day of the millennium will be 99-12-31, and after midnight many computers will see Jan. 1, 2000 as 00-01-01 — a smaller number than the day before. Time will appear to have reversed.

While our most important service providers feel they're ready for the bug and 2000, they also have stringent contingency plans in place, and are putting extra people on call, over and above what they normally would during a regu-

lar year turn-over—just in case.

RCMP

"It's a matter of preparedness," says local RCMP corporal Joel Saule, the Y2K coordinator for the area.

There is potential for problems, so the police want to be, and they believe they are, ready.

"It's unlike any other disaster. We don't know when an earthquake is going to hit. We know there's a potential for problems at 12 that night, and we would be negligent not to have our people on stand-by. We're required to provide

security and services to the population, there is a global potential threat of Y2K, and as a pre-caution, we're putting our members on stand-by," he says.

Not only are all members going to be on stand-by this New Year's, but all leave is cancelled for a two-week period after the dawn of Y2K.

He couldn't say what, if anything, will happen this New Year's, except that preparing for Y2K is like carrying a spare tire in your vehicle. You don't expect a flat, but if you get one, you're covered.

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Study 1/Jan. 1/1999

SECTION 4 PAGE 8 THE GULF NEWS, PORT AU PRINCE, ST. VINCENT, MONDAY, DEC. 27, 1999

FIVE DAYS LEFT

Service providers claim Y2K compliance

Continued from page 1
On a Boeing 747, there's 16,000 chips that are Y2K dependent. Only four of them were found to be relevant. But, what if there's five, and for some reason they didn't find the fifth one?" says Cpl. Saulic.

The bottom line is anything dealing with a computer may be affected. What could happen depends on many things, for example, power or communications failure. The comparison being made with what could happen, is with the ice storm last year in Quebec.

"Everything was paralyzed. There was looting, different crimes. The police have got to be able to respond. It's the same at the gas station. If the pumps go dry, we should have enough gas so that we're able to respond to an emergency," says Cpl. Saulic.

From his assessment around the Port aux Basques area, everything seems to be in good shape. NewTel, Newfoundland Power, Marlex Atlantic, the local police detachment, and all emergency services believe they're ready.

Dr. Charles L. LeGrew

Basque Care Centre

Within the Western Health Care Corporation there is an overall regional plan to deal with Y2K, and site plans, specific to each hospital in the region.

Over one-and-a-half years ago the region began its work to identify all aspects of their operations to see if it is compliant with the computer glitch.

All computers and date-relevant equipment at the hospital was labeled in order of compliance. Green tags meant the computer or piece of equipment is compliant, yellow tags meant it was okay, as long as the date was changed manually, and red tags meant it needed replacing.

Once all the inventory was done, the equipment that received red tags were replaced, which included more office computers and an urine analyzer.

With good planning for such an event, comes a good contingency plan. On Dec. 31, the hospital will be increasing staff in the housekeeping department from 4 p.m. Dec. 31 to 4 p.m. Jan. 1. The reason, housekeeping staff does the utility and building checks, and, if at 12 something goes wrong, there will be someone at the building specifically to handle it. As soon as 12 a.m. strikes, they will go from room-to-room in the building to do a complete check to make sure everything is in order.

Starting on the 31st, all managers, including Dr. Tait, will be carrying beepers in case anything goes wrong, and also, at 12:15 on Jan. 1, John Merritt, local manager, be called back to the building to make sure everything is okay. Once he's convinced there are no problems, he will call the command centre at Western Memorial Hospital in Corner Brook.

"We're well prepared and we're all hoping there will be nothing to it, but we have to be prepared. We also have plans set with an amateur radio operator in case the phones are out."

While the hospital provides a 24-hour emergency service, they usually spread the staff around in the acute care unit, that would work in the emergency department. But on Dec. 31, the emergency department will be staffed and ready.

"We were afraid that if everything shuts down, that with all the parties on the go that we may get an influx of people, even if everything goes normal," says Mr. Merritt.

There will also be a nurse on call in the building who will be the managers' contact for updates. In the event of a power failure, there is a generator on site that kicks in automatically when the power goes out. But, as an extra precaution, the hospital has rented an additional 5000 watt generator—just in case.

Another nurse will be on call in the intensive care unit.

"If everything shuts down and we have no back-up, our monitors will fail, our suction pumps won't work, and if we have anyone who's had a heart attack in the chronic care unit, we will have to do these things manually," says Mr. Merritt.

The hospital also ordered extra food, blankets, laundry and water, in case the town's water supply gives out. There will be extra flash lights all around the hospital and there are propane stoves and barbecues on site to heat water and food, if necessary.

Mr. Merritt couldn't say how much it cost the hospital to prepare for the millennium because a lot of it, like replacing the urine analyzer, was purchased by the corporation.

"We're preparing for power outages, but we should have a lot of people in the emergency department. That won't be an issue unless the power goes. If so, then we'll go back to the old fashioned way of nursing," he says.

Even with the phone and power company declaring compliance, the hospital is prepared for the worst, regardless.

"We've never turned the century before with so much computerized systems. We can say everything is compliant, but we just don't know. We have to be prepared. We're responsible for 50 patients in this building."

"If the power goes off for any reason, even if it has nothing to do with Y2K, people are going to get scared. We have a lot of older people in the cot-

tages and around town, and if that happens we're going to get a lot of people showing up. Some people will be just waiting by the clock, and if there's any hitch at all they will probably be having chest pains," Mr. Merritt continues.

"We're well prepared. The staff has put a lot into getting the contingency plan ready, and we feel quite confident that if everything shuts down that we can take care of our patients. We're looking forward to moving into the new millennium—without a bang," jokes Mr. Merritt.

Newfoundland Power
Newfoundland Power has been preparing for the year 2000 since 1997. At one point, they had approximately 40 employees full-time working on the \$3.5 million project.

Like the hospital, the power company went through an inventory and assessment phase which looked at what things didn't need to be corrected or replaced. Then, they went through a communications phase, to inform and be informed by their suppliers and customers.

"We inventoried almost 1,300 items in 280 locations. Then, we prioritized those by risk. Ranging from power transformers, so high risk, to fax machines rating at low risk," says Newfoundland Power spokesperson Bob Pike.

Then came the critical contingency planning process.

"The big thing for us is we feel like we're ready to go. We're not anticipating any problems," says Mr. Pike.

There's been a lot of communication between Newfoundland Power, Newfoundland Hydro and NewTel because the company's main suppliers can have the biggest impact on how they perform.

If Newfoundland Hydro loses its system, it can cause an imbalance and take out the rest of the system. And, Hydro supplies 90 per cent of Newfoundland Power's product. Likewise, if NewTel loses their system there could be trouble. The power company is very dependent on communications between their offices, main control centre, communications and customer service people, and so on. More importantly, their system control centre is very dependent on data communications through telephone lines. For example, a lot of the hydro stations are controlled remotely, so if they lose that ability and lose communication between other areas, it could cause a lot of havoc and problems, and

cause Newfoundland Power loss control of their system.

"We are able to control our system, but the outside factors such as Hydro and NewTel, can have an impact on us," says Mr. Pike.

"We may still have problems that have nothing to do with the Year 2000. If history repeats itself, we've had a number of New Year's Eves over the past 10 years that have been a real nightmare due to storms. We still have another nature to contend with," he says.

The company has a contingency plan in place that looks at the provision of electricity and communications with their customers.

Those plans were tested by a drill in October, in conjunction with NewTel and Newfoundland Hydro. A number of different scenarios were tested. There were 225 people positioned throughout the organization for the drill, and everything worked successfully.

"If we lost the ability to remotely start our key hydro plants and we lost all power to them, we would have somebody on site who knows how to start those plants from scratch and get them on line."

"We will have key people strategically located in our key substations throughout the province, so that if we do lose power, there would be someone there to manually control the various switches and relays and so on," says Mr. Pike.

There will also be someone in their area offices coordinating and feeding the information back to the control centre.

"There will be an emergency response centre set up where we will be and we will have constant contact with everyone and know where everyone will be, so that we will know what's happening from St. John's to Port aux Basques," says Mr. Pike.

He also says if, for some unforeseen reason the power does go out, it shouldn't take very long to get it back on line.

"Unlike other times when we're trying to track people down, call people in, get them out, we will have people at

our key substations, at our key plants, we'll have our supervisory staff in our offices, and we'll have all our key decision-makers, vice-presidents at the control centre. If we lose the phone lines, then we have our internal radio system. If we lose our internal radio system, we have a satellite phone network put in place that will link the control centre, our call centre, our key area offices together," he says.

About one third of all Newfoundland Power employees will be on the job New Year's Eve, and the 225 people they had in place for the drill, will be in the same places they were during the drill that night.

Someone asked me if they should be doing anything special to prepare for Y2K and I said, you don't need to do anything special, but you should always be prepared. Just because of the environment that we live in. Like, you should have a battery-operated radio, candles, or flashlights and that type of thing," says Mr. Pike.

The company plans to inform the public through local radio stations in case of a power failure.

"It's a lot of preparation, and I anticipate a lot of preparation for nothing. But it's one of those situations where we feel where we've done everything that we can, and we have a contingency plan in

place in case something goes wrong," says the spokesman.

Mr. Pike is so confident there will be no problems, he feels buying up generators specifically in case of power failure due to Y2K isn't necessary.

"That would be a waste of people's money," he said.

The Deer Lake Log Dec 28/99

DEER LAKE NEWS

The Spectator

Newfoundland Power ready for Y2K

By KELLY
GOODYEAR FOSS
The Log

DEER LAKE - Put aside your Y2K fears, there's a good chance the lights won't be going out in another three days.

That's what Verbon Hewlin, manager of the western region for Newfoundland Power, says. While there aren't any guarantees, he says his company has taken steps to prevent an outage.

"The first objective of the whole exercise is to be ready, whatever the eventuality," said Hewlin, at a recent meeting with the local Chamber of Commerce.

"We've been working on this for about two or three years. We want to be ready for whatever might arise, however unlikely that might be."

The company-wide effort has included an assessment of all 1,280 inventory items from 280 different locations to ensure they are Y2K compliant.

It has also included bringing some of the province's 20 hydroelectric plants on line in case of emergency. Deer Lake and parts of Corner Brook are covered by one contingency plan which has Deer Lake Power's 125 megawatt hydroelectric plant coming online to provide the juice in case of an emergency.

"It's there as an option," said Hewlin.

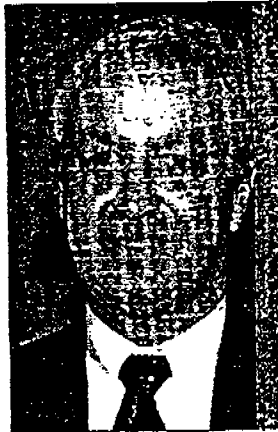
"It's always been there. Obviously, they would prefer to use it to operate the mill, but under the circumstances, it's one of the things we've looked at as well."

According to Hewlin, each manager of each department in the company has been responsible to run through their whole area and identify critical locations where problems could potentially arise and put contingency plans in place to deal with those.

"They were all in place by the end of September and in October we had a test run," said Hewlin.

"We simulated a number of different possibilities. It was a pretty big effort and pretty successful I might add. We controlled a lot of the things we were planning on but we also learned a few lessons and went back and made adjustments as a result."

The compa-



"We've been working on this for about two or three years. We want to be ready for whatever might arise, however unlikely that might be."

- Verbon Hewlin

ny has also created other contingency plans to address the possibility of telephone services and radio communications. They've been working in close contact with Newfoundland Hydro, who

provides 85 per cent of their power, and NewTel, who provides their communication links to make sure they are ready as well.

"We've arrived and now in

two days we will be put to the test in terms of the whole Y2K effort," said Hewlin.

"On Dec. 31, one-third of our total work force of about 700 employees will be working. All our vice-presidents and our president will be involved and we will have people manning all of our sub-stations, hydroelectric plants and call centre. I don't want to give you a wrong indication, we're not expecting any problems. But there are some things beyond our control that we need to be ready to deal with in case something did happen."

All eyes will be on Newfoundland as the clock rolls over into a new year.

"As it turns out, due to our unique timing, we get to turn the clock a half hour earlier than anyone else in North America so there's going to be a fair bit of interest from across the country," said Hewlin.

"They will be contacting our communications people to find out how it worked and what's happened. Hopefully we'll have good news for them."