



GLP Note 4.1 - The *Green Energy Act* Updated July 2012

The *Green Energy Act* was passed in 2009. This Act impacts the economic well being of the province and was intended to attract new investment, create new green economy jobs and better protect the environment. Affordability, clean energy, job creation, and reliability are the four key thrusts of the Act.

Key elements of the legislation (and related policy) include:

- Streamlined approvals for renewable energy projects, spurring renewable energy investment while working with municipalities and ensuring strong protection for health, safety and community consultation
- Mandatory (unless waived by buyer) home energy audits prior to the sale of homes
- Developing a feed-in-tariff system to provide guaranteed prices for renewable energy projects, with a related focus on helping companies, farmers, co-ops and other groups navigate the approvals process, creating Ontario jobs, and developing a smart grid that, among its benefits, will support this new energy supply
 - In March 2012, Energy Minister Chris Bentley released a report that reconfirmed its commitment to green energy
 - Ontario's Feed-in-tariff (FIT) program will see projects with municipal support or community participation receive priority approval. Recommendations from a scheduled review of Ontario's FIT program were also announced.
- Opportunities for municipalities, First Nation and Métis communities to build, own and operate their own renewable energy projects
- New programs for municipalities, communities and Aboriginal groups to ensure some project costs associated with community renewable energy projects can be recovered

- Establishment of an academic research chair to examine potential public health effects of renewable energy projects. Once in force, the legislation itself will lead to many important changes, including a process of regulatory and policy changes, which will also benefit from public and stakeholder consultation.

In December 2011, OSPE released "Wind and the Electrical Grid" to inform the Ministry of Energy about the technical challenges of integrating wind and included recommendations to develop guidelines for the Ministry and agencies that ensures Ontario specific engineering expertise is used during the development.

There are no regulatory impacts to PEO at this time, so no involvement by the GLP is required. This legislation is of interest to the profession as it involves the expertise of many engineers. Requests for the involvement of engineers concerning the *Green Energy Act* are to be referred to OSPE.

Key points:

- The *Green Energy Act* was passed in 2009 and was intended to attract new investment, create new green economy jobs and better protect the environment.
- No involvement currently by the GLP, as the legislation does not have impacts on the regulation of professional engineering. Information only as it involves the engineering profession
- In December 2011, OSPE released "Wind and the Electrical Grid" to inform and recommend the development of guidelines for the Ministry and agencies that ensures Ontario specific engineering expertise is used.
- Requests for involvement of engineers concerning the *Green Energy Act* are to be referred to OSPE.