



## York Region takes the *Keep Cool* challenge

*Hydro One, Newmarket Hydro, PowerStream and The Home Depot encourage retiring and recycling old room air conditioners to reduce electricity demand and improve air quality*

June 8, 2006 – York Region, ON – Keep Cool 2006, a program which encourages the recycling of old room air conditioners to reduce electricity consumption, was launched today by Clean Air Foundation with partners Hydro One, Newmarket Hydro, PowerStream, The Home Depot Canada, Environment Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. For the first time, York Region residents are invited to participate in the program and reap the rewards of saving electricity by recycling old room air conditioners.

*Keep Cool* encourages people across Ontario to get rid of old room air conditioners that are high users of electricity and contribute to deteriorating air quality. By simply retiring one room air conditioner per household, participants can save about \$100 each year on their electricity bill. The program will run for the first time in York Region from June 10 - 25, on weekends only. It is the only program of its kind in Canada.

York Region residents which include Aurora, Newmarket, King Township, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Georgina can recycle their old air conditioners at Home Depot locations in Newmarket and Aurora, (for more details, please visit [www.keepcool.ca](http://www.keepcool.ca)). *Keep Cool* representatives will be available to provide participants with a \$25 Home Depot gift card for each room air conditioner collected.

"Hydro One customers don't just care about their electricity bill, they care about the environment," said Tom Parkinson, Hydro One President and CEO. "We're asking them to participate in *Keep Cool* and help to relieve Ontario's electricity use during peak periods while saving money on their bill."

"Participating in the *Keep Cool* program will help to make sure that electricity is there when we need it," said Paul Ferguson, president of Newmarket Hydro Ltd. "We hope the citizens of Newmarket will retire their old air conditioners and help curb electricity demand this summer."

"The *Keep Cool* program gives us the opportunity to share energy efficiency best practices with our customers," said Brian Bentz, President and CEO of PowerStream Inc. "Helping our customers be more energy efficient and save money benefits everyone in the long run."

The *Keep Cool* program hopes to permanently retire and recycle 500 old air conditioners in York Region, reducing electricity demand by 568 kilowatts (kW) – enough electricity to power approximately 170 homes. The overall campaign is expected to collect at least 10,000 units across Ontario, representing electricity savings of about 11 MW – the amount of electricity required to power about 3,300 homes.

"We all know how hot it gets in Southern Ontario during the summer months and how the smog makes being outside almost unbearable on occasion," said Ersilia Serafini, Executive Director of the Clean Air Foundation. "By retiring old air conditioners, these communities can help curb demand on electricity production and decrease emissions that contribute to smog. We are not asking people to suffer through the heat; we are encouraging them to use cleaner cooling alternatives."

The program partners encourage York Region residents to use cleaner cooling alternatives such as: new ENERGY STAR® room air conditioners, which use 30-70 per cent less electricity than older models; ceiling fans; closing blinds and curtains; and planting shade trees to reduce electricity consumption this summer.

"*Keep Cool* gives the citizens of York Region more opportunities to conserve electricity at peak usage times," said Annette Verschuren, president of The Home Depot Canada. "We're committed to helping improve the environment by providing consumers with energy-efficient product choices and action-oriented incentives that make a positive difference."

Last year, *Keep Cool* collected and retired 5,772 air conditioners, representing a reduction of about 6 MW of peak demand electricity – the amount of electricity to power about 1,800 homes. The program resulted in a reduction of 1,488 tonnes of carbon dioxide, 7 tonnes of nitrogen oxide and 315 tonnes of sulphur dioxide. Additionally, 824 kg of refrigerant (ozone depleting substances) were collected.

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#### About the Clean Air Foundation

The Clean Air Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing, implementing and managing public engagement programs and strategic approaches that lead to measurable emissions reductions, to improve air quality and protect the climate. The Foundation manages six public engagement programs - *Car Heaven*, *Mow Down Pollution*, *Keep Cool*, *Energy Smarts*, *Switch Out* and *Cool Shops*.

#### About Hydro One

Hydro One owns and operates Ontario's 28,400 kilometre high-voltage transmission network that delivers electricity to large industrial customers and municipal utilities, and a 122,000 kilometre low-voltage distribution system that serves about 1.2 million end-use customers and smaller municipal utilities in the province. Hydro One is wholly owned by the Ontario Government.

#### About Newmarket Hydro Ltd.

Newmarket Hydro is a mid-size electric utility serving over 26,000 customers in the heart of York Region, midway between downtown Toronto and Barrie. The Town of Newmarket has a population of over 80,000 with annual growth of over 4%. For more information, visit [www.nmhydro.ca](http://www.nmhydro.ca).

#### About PowerStream Inc.

PowerStream Inc. is one of the largest local electricity distribution companies in Ontario, providing service to more than 220,000 residential and business customers in the municipalities of Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan. It is an incorporated entity, jointly owned by the City of Vaughan and the Town of Markham.

#### About The Home Depot Canada

Founded in 1978, in Atlanta, Georgia, The Home Depot is the world's largest home improvement retailer currently operating 2,064 stores, including 142 The Home Depot stores across Canada. The Company reported fiscal 2005 sales of US\$81.5 billion and employs approximately 355,000 associates, including more than 26,000 Canadians.

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