

Consumers expected to cut power use as B.C. government unveils Clean Energy Act

Ambitious Liberal plan expected this week

BY SCOTT SIMPSON, VANCOUVER SUN APRIL 29, 2010



B.C. is looking to attract investment and jobs from green power projects, and bolster the provincial treasury by creating a power surplus to support profitable electricity exports. Last year, the B.C. Government struck a "green energy task force" to look at opportunities around B.C.'s supply of renewable electricity. The task force recommendations were never made public, but it appears the Liberals are contemplating rapid, not gradual, change for the sector.

Photograph by: Greg Bos , Reuters

Victoria, B.C. - The B.C. Liberals have introduced a new Clean Energy Act that puts unprecedented pressure on BC Hydro customers to cut their consumption of electricity.

Legislation introduced Wednesday in the B.C. legislature calls on Hydro to meet 66 per cent — two-thirds — of new power demand through energy efficiency and conservation by 2020, rather than expanded development of new electricity supply.

That's up from a 50-per-cent conservation target in 2007.

The Liberals have ordered Hydro to proceed with a pair of so-called 'smart' initiatives to support that target — development of a high-tech electricity grid that detects cheaters and guards against blackouts, and a \$1-billion program to install interactive power meters in every home by 2012.

Other measures announced in the act include a confirmation of the government's interest in developing electricity for export — but only if there's no risk to ratepayers — and a merging of the BC

