



# CANCEL THE 2012 BAN ON INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULBS

## A FREEDOM PARTY OF ONTARIO 2011 ELECTION PLANK

In 2003, Dalton McGuinty had campaigned on closing all of Ontario's coal-powered electricity generation plants by 2007 for the purposes of improving air quality. By 2007, he was nowhere close to closing them. He could not do so, because Ontario did not reliably have enough power to meet its needs, and closing the coal plants would have worsened the crisis greatly. Having failed for almost four years to increase the supply of electricity in the province, the McGuinty government decided to force people to consume less energy: to ration electricity.

Imposing a system of rationing is not a politically popular thing to do, but people generally do not blame politicians who impose rationing if there is a "need" to ration. Luckily for McGuinty, Al Gore had provided him with the alleged "need" he was looking for. In 2006, Gore's movie, "An Inconvenient Truth", had caused wide-spread panic that human industrial activity was producing enough CO2 to cause catastrophic global warming. McGuinty capitalized on that fear. Rather than telling Ontarians that he was turning to electricity rationing because he had failed to increase the supply of electricity, McGuinty told Ontarians that "...Ontario has to start being a responsible global citizen", and that he was working on an "aggressive plan" to "deal with greenhouse gases".

In February of 2006, radical environmentalist Matt Prescott launched a "ban the bulb" campaign to encourage governments to ban the incandescent light bulb and to subsidize fluorescent light bulbs. On April 18, 2007, the McGuinty government announced that it was banning incandescent bulbs starting in 2012. That ban was released as part of a misguided "Flick Off" campaign to discourage electricity use (aimed at youth, the Flick Off campaign intentionally used a font designed to make the word "Flick" look like a four-letter expletive). At the same time, the McGuinty government forked out taxpayer dollars for commercials in which TV personality David Suzuki is depicted fictionally snatching incandescent light bulbs from the homes of homeowners, and replacing them with fluorescent ones.



*Then Liberal Environment Minister Laurel Broten introduces Ontario's \$500,000.00 contribution to the "Flick Off" campaign (April 25, 2007). The campaign website's homepage read: "We need you to FLICK OFF, and tell everyone you know to FLICK OFF. The more you do it, the cooler it gets. The planet, that is." The Liberals defended their half-million dollar expenditure on the campaign: "It's a suitable website for youth" said Broten.*

Far from condemning the 2012 ban on incandescent light bulbs, the Progressive Conservatives wanted the ban to start sooner. Then Progressive Conservative party leader John Tory said the Progressive Conservatives wanted the ban to start "as soon as possible" and that the McGuinty government "should get on with it."



*Still shot from "Porchlight" (2007 PowerWise video) in which David Suzuki is found replacing an unsuspecting neighbour's incandescent bulb with a fluorescent one.*

However, by that time, industrial and commercial businesses - which then consumed more than 70 percent of Ontario's electricity - were leaving Ontario for places like India and China, where labour costs are exceptionally lower. By 2010, Ontario's industrial sector had been gutted. The result: Ontario now has not too little electricity, but too much. The oversupply is so bad that Ontario sometimes has to pay American facilities to take our excess electricity.

Fluorescent light bulbs have some advantages over incandescent bulbs. They do not give off as much heat, which is good during hot summer months. It is claimed that they last longer than incandescent light bulbs. They also require less electricity. However, fluorescent light bulbs also have some drawbacks:

- some people have reported the explosion of fluorescent bulbs;
- fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury, which makes them difficult to dispose of in an environmental sound way;
- fluorescent light bulbs are not suitable for exterior use on Canada's freezing cold days of winter, of late fall, and of early spring;
- some people find fluorescent light to be hard on the eyes, especially when reading;
- fluorescent light bulbs do not provide the additional house-warming heat that incandescent light bulbs do for Ontario's cool or freezing days in Autumn, Winter, and Spring; and
- fluorescent light bulbs are much more expensive than incandescent bulbs.

Each kind of bulb has its advantages and disadvantages. Ontario now has surplus energy. There is no need to ban incandescent light bulbs.

**A Freedom government will scrap the 2012 ban on incandescent light bulbs.** You will be able to use whichever bulb suits your purpose and your budget.

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