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Natural Gas Savings Good News for Holiday Pocketbooks

Ontarians Spent \$400 Less in 2012 Due to Robust Supply

TORONTO, Nov. 21, 2012 /CNW/ - Ontarians will have a little more room in their pocketbooks this holiday season, compared to previous years, thanks to some noticeable savings on their natural gas bills. According to the Ontario Natural Gas Alliance (ONGA), a typical natural gas customer will have about \$400 more in their wallets today, versus what they were paying five years ago.

"We tend to not think about energy as long as the lights come on when we flick the switch," says Dr. Phil Walsh, associate professor at the Centre for Urban Energy at Ryerson University. "But Ontarians will notice the savings on their home's annual natural gas bills, and that's welcome news for many families this holiday season."

According to ONGA, in addition to individual homeowners' savings, businesses and industries are saving considerably more. In total, the average annual energy savings for Ontario households and industry is about \$4 billion. These savings are attributed to an increasingly robust natural gas supply.

As the province continues with its plan to phase out coal-fired electricity generation by 2014, and as renewable energies such as wind and solar power only account for 4.8 per cent of Ontario's supply mix, Dr. Walsh says that natural gas' role is becoming absolutely vital. "Ontarians want an energy supply for both their homes and the province that is relatively clean and affordable - natural gas satisfies those wants."

"It's on-demand energy that Ontario needs in the mix," adds Walsh. "Natural gas works well to complement renewables that are largely weather-dependent. It will be a significant contributor to our province's energy future."

According to a new research study conducted by Innovative Research Group on behalf of ONGA, nearly two thirds of the province (64 per cent), believe that access to affordable energy is critical, and agree that energy used to heat and power Ontario homes should be priced at levels that even those on fixed incomes can afford.

The same study found that 73 per cent of Ontarians believe natural gas is by far the most affordable way to produce electricity for the province. To this end, six out of 10 Ontarians agree the province's energy supply mix should include more natural gas to generate our electricity.

To help Ontarians find out more about the benefits of natural gas, ONGA launched a new educational website today: www.cleanandaffordable.ca. The site contains information on the benefits of natural gas as it relates both to Ontario's environmental vision and its economy.

The telephone survey was conducted on behalf of ONGA by Innovative Research Group, using its monthly Ontario telephone service, among 605 randomly selected Ontario residents, 18-years or older, between October 17 and 22, 2012. The aggregate results are considered accurate to within \pm 4.0 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

Note to Editors: \$400 savings are based on Enbridge Gas Distribution and Union Gas residential customers using 2,600 cubic metres of natural gas per year for home and water heating. Actual savings are based on annual natural gas consumption.

About ONGA

The Ontario Natural Gas Alliance (ONGA) is a newly formed partnership between two of Ontario's leading natural gas distribution companies, Enbridge Gas Distribution and Union Gas. ONGA was created to help the public understand the vital role natural gas can play in Ontario's future-forward clean energy mix. ONGA is dedicated to education around the many positive attributes of natural gas, including its affordability, cleanliness and potential to fuel an economic revitalization that will create jobs and expand Ontario's economy. For more information, please visit: www.cleanandaffordable.ca.

SOURCE: Ontario Natural Gas Alliance

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Ontario Natural Gas Alliance

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