

Ontario's stalled wind plan will cost taxpayers

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Ontario taxpayers will be on the hook for years paying for Ontario's failed experiment with wind energy, Conservative energy critic John Yakabuski said Friday.

Shortly after Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announced his government would be scrapping a controversial plan to build off-shore wind farms, Yakabuski said Ontarians will feel the fallout from the "failed" project in their pocketbooks.

"This is Dalton MCGuinty's latest backtrack on his failed expensive energy experiments," Yakabuski said in a statement. "These experiments are doing nothing but driving up hydro bills for Ontario families ... and now even Dalton McGuinty recognizes it."

Last spring, Toronto Hydro set up equipment to test wind speeds over Lake Ontario. The Ontario government's ultimate plan was to erect up to 60 offshore wind turbines that would stretch from Ajax to Toronto's Leslie St. Spit.

McGuinty pushed for the wind-farm projects, arguing it could be both an alternative as Ontario starts to phase out its coal-burning plants, and as a way of pushing further toward a green-based economy.

In the Spring of 2010, Ontario's Progressive Conservatives called for a moratorium on the find-farm projects until an independent study on the environmental and health effects of the farms could be completed.

On Friday, the Ontario Liberals quietly mothballed the project, citing insufficient evidence on how they could effect people's health.

McGuinty's wind-farm plans were met with visceral opposition, particularly from bluff-dwelling residents in the Guildwood area of Scarborough, many citing the possible health and environmental hazards the turbines could cause.

Wind Concerns Ontario president John Laforet said for them, it was also a matter of protecting Lake Ontario from being industrialized by an "unproven" form of energy production.

"My view is the people of Ontario shouldn't be paying premiums for a bad form of energy," said Laforet late Friday, adding wind farm opponents have been warning the McGuinty Liberals since 2007 that wind farms are a bad idea.

“The reality is, wind isn’t reliable. It’s a failed technology ... It doesn’t work on a big scale,” said Laforet.