

Take Charge!

A National Day of Action in support of a Canadian Energy Strategy



Canadians need a national energy strategy – one that puts citizens' interests ahead of multi-billion dollar oil companies. Right now, our country does not have a national energy strategy that addresses where our energy comes from, is going, and the high price of environmental devastation that comes with producing it.

Here are five reasons Canada needs a National Energy Strategy:

1. To give Canadians security of supply:

Canada now produces about 40 per cent more oil than it consumes, but has to rely heavily on imported oil from offshore. Thanks to NAFTA, Canada now exports 70 per cent of the oil and 61 per cent of the natural gas we produce each year to the United States. Under NAFTA, we can't ever cut back on the proportion of energy we produce and sell to the United States, even in times when our country runs short.

2. To protect our environment:

Canada's oil and gas industry – the tar sands in particular – will prevent Canada from meeting its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. Massive pipeline projects are cutting huge paths across the country, destroying habitats and local environments. A substantial growth in uranium mining has also raised concerns about land and water contamination from radioactive waste left by the mining process.

3. To help our economy:

Energy production is a major contributor to the Canadian economy but the oil and gas industry in Canada has a lower taxation level than all other major industries in Canada. The industry is raking in record profits, but still receives significant tax breaks and subsidies from the federal government.

4. To protect our health and future:

The extraction process in the Alberta tar sands requires approximately five barrels of water to produce one barrel of crude oil. The remaining water is poisoned to the point that it can no longer be used, leaving the water to sit in vast, toxic pools. Local physicians have sounded alarm bells over rising cancer rates in communities near the tar sands, and recent hydro projects in BC have proposed huge water takings.

5. To put people in control, not corporations:

Thanks to our heavy-handed "free market" approach to energy, Canadians do not have control over our country's energy resources. The Harper government continues to let oil and gas companies set the agenda. And as shown by a recently launched NAFTA lawsuit by Exxon-Mobil and Murphy Oil, big oil companies will use trade agreements to resist even modest provincial demands.

Tell Prime Minister Stephen Harper that Canada needs a National Energy Strategy *now*.

For more information about the Council of Canadians' energy campaign, visit www.canadians.org or call us at 1-800-387-7177.

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