

Election Campaign

# ENGINEERING\* on the Hill

www.engineerscanada.ca

REPORTING ON ISSUES ON PARLIAMENT HILL OF INTEREST TO THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION

This publication is not extensive and represents statements and activities made by the different federal parties during the last weeks relating to our position statements. Engineers Canada will work with the newly elected government on issues of importance to the engineering profession. This week the focus is on the issue of the environment.

## The Environment

Engineers Canada believes that targeted federal funding for climate change research is required to increase the reliability of scientific data used by engineers.

Engineers Canada believes that targeted federal funding towards adaptation demonstration projects that evaluate methods and determine benefits and costs will accelerate Canada's ability to adapt to future changes in climate.

Engineers Canada sees value for the federal government in creating formal linkages between engineers, scientists and other key stakeholders.

Establishing formal dialogue between engineers and scientists will promote the sharing of up-to-date information on best adaptive practices and regional climate datasets. Such an arrangement could also provide input to government for setting research, legislative and expenditure priorities to support its climate change efforts.

Engineers Canada believes that regular and meaningful consultation between the engineering profession and the federal government on climate change policy is required. In addition, the engineering profession can provide the technical expertise on adaptation and mitigation that government requires to develop sound implementation strategies.

## The Liberal Plan for Climate Change

### The Bloc Québécois vision for the environment

The Bloc members maintain that in 2003, in lock step with the Bush Administration, the Conservatives wanted to drag Canada into the war in Iraq and tear up the Kyoto Protocol. They believe the federal government thought it more important to stand up for the oil companies than for the environment.

**Environmental Advocacy.** This value is shared by an ever increasing number of individuals and nations around the world. Tackling climate change has become a fundamental issue for all of humanity and Québec is determined to make its contribution.

The Bloc Québécois, respecting Québec's choices, claims to lead the fight in Ottawa to enforce the Kyoto Protocol.

The Liberals believe that climate change may well be the most pressing challenge of our time. But it also presents a rare opportunity. By encouraging energy-efficient and clean technologies and practices today, they believe that Canada can be a leader in the economy of tomorrow.

The Liberal's proposed green shift is the foundation of a national climate change plan, one that puts a price on carbon and addresses the carbon pollution that is produced by all sectors of our economy and is stored in our natural spaces.

To set a clear path for Canadians, and be taken seriously internationally, the Liberals want to establish firm targets to cut emissions in the short, medium and long term. According to their platform, *A Liberal government will:*

- respect our commitments and international obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions to at least 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, and increasing this goal to at least 25 percent if other countries make comparable efforts;

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## Liberal Party (continued from page 1)

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 40 percent below 1990 emission levels by 2035
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 60 to 80 percent below 1990 emission levels by 2050.

The Liberals believe that these targets are tough but achievable. They believe that they are also consistent with those of other leading jurisdictions. Most importantly, Liberals maintain that the targets are what scientific experts tell us is required to avert the dangers of climate change and protect human health.

Inspired by that goal, a Liberal government will enact a plan to ensure that Canada reaches these targets, making Canada a world leader in global environmental citizenship.

For a more details on the **Liberal Green Shift**, you may visit:  
[http://www.liberal.ca/pdf/platform/2008lp\\_greener\\_e.pdf](http://www.liberal.ca/pdf/platform/2008lp_greener_e.pdf)

### Engineers Canada National Position Statements and Priority Issues

For a full and comprehensive version of the national position statements and priority issues, please visit the following web site:  
[http://www.engineerscanada.ca/e/prog\\_government\\_3.cfm](http://www.engineerscanada.ca/e/prog_government_3.cfm)

### On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Do You Know Where to Vote?

Go to [www.electionscanada.ca](http://www.electionscanada.ca) and punch in your home postal code in the Voter Information Services Box in the centre of the web page. You will find the name of your home riding, be able to determine whether you are on the eligible voters list, and who to contact if you appear not eligible.

**For further details and a more in depth view of the various party platforms, please consult their websites at:**

[www.ndp.ca](http://www.ndp.ca)  
[www.liberal.ca](http://www.liberal.ca)  
[www.presentpourlequebec.org](http://www.presentpourlequebec.org)  
[www.greenparty.ca](http://www.greenparty.ca)  
[www.conservative.ca](http://www.conservative.ca)

## The Green Party of Canada on the Environment

The Green Party contends that the most urgent threat is the climate crisis. They have promised to move to a low-carbon economy and dramatically reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. They believe that they can do this in ways that enhance Canada's economy and the well-being of Canadians.

One such measure would be the Green Party's proposed carbon tax shift. While the price of carbon intensive items like gasoline, electricity and heating fuel will rise with a carbon tax, other taxes will fall to compensate. As a result, the overall effect of the Green Party's carbon tax shift will generally be neutral. But with carbon taxed more heavily, Canadians can reduce the taxes they pay by switching to fuels that are less carbon intensive and by taking measures to increase energy efficiency in other areas. When Canadians act to reduce the amount of carbon tax they pay, they will simultaneously help to fight climate change by reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to the Green Tax Shift, the green Party will:

1. Cut greenhouse gas emissions to 30 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80 per cent by 2050.
2. Use cap and trade, with hard caps, for some large polluters.
3. Expand research and development of low-carbon technologies.
4. Improve energy productivity through smarter regulation of large appliances and vehicles, and a national program to retrofit existing buildings.
5. Support only bio-fuels that actually save carbon emissions and don't distort food supplies or prices. That means no corn- or grain-based ethanol.
6. Participate constructively in global negotiations.

**For the full Green Party platform, please visit: <http://www.greenparty.ca/en/platform>**

## The Plan for the environment: New Democrats will.....

Implement new legislation to achieve deep, science-based reductions of climate pollution in the post 2012 period. The Climate Change Accountability Act, proposed by the New Democrats and adopted by Parliament on June 4, 2008, is based on the Case for Deep Reductions report by the Pembina Institute, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. This will establish:

- A long-term target to reduce Canadian greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
- A medium-term target to bring emissions 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.

These are the medium and long-term targets consistent with the proposed act will:

- Provide authority for the government to make regulations in order to meet the targets and set penalties for those who contravene regulations passed under the Act.

The NDP further proposes to implement a clean air and fighting climate change program: They propose to...

- Make big polluters pay. We will put a price on carbon through a "cap-and-trade" carbon pricing system which establishes hard limits on pollution and a tough charge on polluters who exceed the limits.
- All revenue will be applied to environmental solutions.
- Implement Jack Layton's \$3 billion Green-Collar Jobs Plan, including a fund for training. We will invest \$750 million into this fund every year.
- Introduce an environmental automobile strategy to:
  - Invest in Canadian production of low-emission cars to ensure our auto industry remains viable, with aggressive incentives for manufacturers who develop and manufacture cars in Canada with low or zero greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Provide federal government support for pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths in communities as part of our commitment to sustainable transport. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure will have health benefits for Canadians who choose to walk or cycle.
  - Bring in mandatory vehicle emission standards for all vehicles sold in Canada, based on leading North American standards.

### Conservative Party of Canada

On Tuesday, October 7, 2008, the Conservative Party released a broad platform dealing primarily with their plan of action for the Canadian economy. It is built on four principles:

- Keeping our budget balanced
- Lowering taxes
- Keeping inflation down
- Investing to ensure we continue to create jobs

While the Party does identify the environment as a priority, it presented no platform on this or other priority issues relating to the engineering profession's position statements.

To read more of the Conservative platform, please visit:

[http://www.conservative.ca/?section\\_id=5317&section\\_copy\\_id=106952&language\\_id=0](http://www.conservative.ca/?section_id=5317&section_copy_id=106952&language_id=0)