

For immediate release

January 26, 2017

Poll shows high support for keeping Power Smart in Manitoba Hydro
Probe poll shows 94% support for Power Smart, 78% say keep Power Smart in Hydro

WINNIPEG – Manitoba Hydro’s Power Smart energy savings program enjoys strong support among Manitobans, according to recent polling conducted by Probe Research for Local 998 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

“Our polling results show 94% support for Power Smart,” said Chris Mravinec, President of CUPE Local 998, representing over one thousand technical and clerical workers at Hydro. “This high support is steady across all age, income and geographic groups, and does not depend on whether or not respondents had made use of the program.”

Added Mravinec: “Polling also shows that 78% of respondents think Manitoba Hydro should continue to run Power Smart, while only 12% prefer a new agency and 10% are unsure.”

Poll results are based on a random sample of 1,000 respondents, and there is 95 percent certainty that the results are within ± 3.1 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Manitoba had been interviewed.

The polling results support CUPE’s concerns about government’s plans to remove the Power Smart program from Hydro. Any new agency tasked with running Power Smart would require set-up and transition costs, and ongoing costs associated with a new board and administration. Hydro could end up buying back services that Manitobans currently own and receive through their public utility.

“We urge the provincial government to take note of Manitobans’ strong support for keeping Power Smart as part of Manitoba Hydro,” said Mravinec. “If the provincial government were committed to reducing red tape, it would leave Power Smart as-is. It is neither efficient nor cost-effective to change something that works so well and enjoys so much public support and industry support.”

Added Mravinec: “Let’s take our energy savings to the next level – by keeping Power Smart with Hydro.”

The Canadian Union of Public Employees is Canada’s largest union, representing more than a half-million members. In Manitoba, CUPE represents approximately 25,000 members working in health care facilities, personal care homes, school divisions, municipal services, social services, child care centres, public utilities, libraries and family emergency services.

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