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Reprint from Volume 21 Number 22

Nov 5, 2009

## **BCUC cannot rely on stopgap Burrard power—Province**

Following its July 27 Hearings on BC Hydro's Long Term Acquisition Program, the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) had decided to include power from the natural gas-fired Burrard Generating Station in its estimate of the maximum power available. Located in the Lower Mainland, natural gas-fired Burrard is used only for temporary peak situations when available power is not enough to meet demand.

The provincial government has now ordered BCUC to exclude Burrard's capacity from any further calculations; although the plant would continue to be maintained for emergency use, as before. (When it is in use, Burrard is said to be the largest point source of greenhouse gases in the province.)

In its decision this summer, BCUC, the independent regulatory body that oversees the nuts and bolts of BC's energy scene, compared the total provincial power available with calculated peaks in expected demand and the result was used

by BC Hydro to estimate new generating capacity needs, typically from run-of-river or wind power. In effect, this calculation is a comparison of worst-case scenarios—maximum power demand compared to generating capacity in an extreme low-water year.

In most situations, BC has excess generating capacity and is in a position to export power.

### **Burrard—Less Cost, More GHG**

BCUC's July decision was based on the fact that firing up Burrard only when necessary costs less than maintaining excess generating capacity, particularly by building new run-of-river plants. Home demand is managed without creating more generating infrastructure like dams and transmission lines.

The government's edict means that BC Hydro will now have to call for more proposals for 'green' power from Independent Power Producers. ☞

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This article was published (Nov 5, 2009) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Victoria to Campbell River to Howe Sound.

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