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Alberta to advance key electricity initiatives

Edmonton... Working towards the province's goals of clean energy production and wise energy use, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) has been directed to gather information on three key initiatives to enhance conservation, development of green energy sources and the regulatory process.

Three reviews will be conducted and the AUC will report back to the Minister of Energy.

1. Review the regulatory approval process for hydroelectric facilities. Additional hydroelectric generation in Alberta has the potential to be a clean energy source. An efficient and effective regulatory process is required for new projects. The AUC's review will be used to find out what has worked in the past and what improvements could be considered.
2. Determine how smart grid technology can be used to modernize the electricity system. To move forward on the use of this technology in the province, a full range of options for smart grid needs to be considered. Smart grid technology can include smart metering or Advanced Metering Infrastructure.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure improves the measurement of electricity use and helps consumers make more informed decisions on wise electricity use. Encouraging Albertans to use appliances in non-peak times can help the province slow the rate of annual growth in peak demand.

3. Review the rules for the regulation of consumer choices for both natural gas and electricity. Albertans have the option of choosing a regulated rate for both electricity and natural gas energy service. Consistent rules for how these rates are regulated will add to the tools that help Albertans make informed choices.

The AUC reviews will be conducted over the next year.

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