

Anti-carbon tax stickers coming to all gas pumps across Ontario



Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

As a court battle takes place with Ontario issuing a constitutional challenge against the federal carbon tax, the Ontario government has tabled legislation that would require stickers to be placed on gasoline pumps in the province.

The stickers are designed to show gas buyers the hidden cost of the carbon tax that will add more than 11 cents per litre to the price of gasoline by 2022. In addition, the government has communicated to the Ontario Energy Board its expectation that the tax is clearly reflected on natural gas bills.

The carbon tax added five cents to each litre of gasoline when it was put in place on April 1.

“The people of Ontario deserve to know the full truth about how the federal carbon tax will make their lives more unaffordable,” said Greg Rickford, minister of energy, northern development and mines. “This job-killing tax will make everything more expensive, but it will hit our wallets hardest when it comes to gas prices and home-heating costs.”

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones, visited the Shell station on Broadway in Orangeville on Wednesday and brought an example of the sticker that will be required on gas pumps if the legislation passes.

Ms. Jones said the provincial government's opposition to the carbon tax is based on the increased costs that will affect both regular households and other services in the community.

“We continue to our commitment to fight the federal carbon tax because we have seen how it is going to impact individuals whether it's at the pumps or heating their homes,” Ms. Jones said. “In my own ministry as solicitor general we've seen the impact of how it's going to make it more expensive for our OPP officers, for our firefighters, and our paramedics to fuel up their vehicles. They won't get a rebate cheque.”

The Progressive Conservative government estimates Ontario hospitals will experience an increase in annual heating costs of \$10.9 million in 2019 and \$27.2 million in 2022. Those increases will also apply to colleges, universities and nursing and senior care homes.

The stickers will be required to be placed at a prominent place on gas pumps if the legislation goes through.

?The budget bill has not passed, but when it passes we will be distributing these stickers to gas stations across Ontario and it will be an immediate and regular reminder of how much the federal carbon tax is costing the people of Dufferin-Caledon and Ontario when they fill up their tanks,? Ms. Jones said, adding ?Frankly I think the vast majority of private gas companies understand and want to be able to explain to people the impact of the carbon tax. I don't anticipate that there will be a lot of gas stations that aren't interested in posting it.?

Gas stations owners could be fined under the legislation if they refuse to post the stickers.

The government says provinces, not the federal government, should have control over how they reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

?We have a history of understanding and wanting to make our environment better,? Ms. Jones said. ?We don't want the federal government to impose their system. In British Columbia they've had a carbon tax since 2008 and their emissions have actually gone up. To suggest that a carbon tax is the only and exclusive way to decrease carbon emissions is flawed. The assumption that it's only going to impact gas is flawed. We know that the cost of moving our goods from the purchaser to the seller is going to increase and that's how we're trying to educate people and make sure people understand that this is a federally imposed carbon tax. These labels that we will be putting on gas pumps is part of that reminder, that while it started in April it's going to continue and continue to be a part of our lives. What I'm hearing from constituents is that the cost of living continues to be a problem in Dufferin-Caledon.?

Ms. Jones said the PC government's plan is to focus on the big polluters in the province, not the little guy.

?You cannot change an individual's patterns by increasing the cost of gas. They still have to get to school, they still have to get to work, they still have to get their children to hockey and lacrosse,? Ms. Jones said. ?That is not a pattern that will shift people's ideals.?