

Alectra Signs Leadership Accord on Gender Diversity for the Canadian Electricity Industry

Signatories demonstrate their commitment to leveling playing field for women in the sector

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OTTAWA, Ontario--(Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) and the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Minister of Status of Women, today announced EHRC's newest initiative to support the increased representation of women as skilled workers in the electricity and renewable energy sector.

The *Leadership Accord on Gender Diversity for the Electricity Industry* is a public commitment by employers, educators, unions and governments to promote the values of diversity and inclusion within their organizations. Whether it's through recruitment, retention or governance practices, the signatories to this Accord acknowledge that united action is required to ensure the support of women in the industry, along with equality and fairness for the entire workforce. Several industry leaders have already signed on to the accord as founding partners, including Ontario Power Generation, Alectra Inc., Hydro Ottawa, the Power Workers' Union and a host of others (noted below).

The announcement took place during an event hosted by Natural Resources Canada in honour of International Women's Day, which brought together some of Canada's leading women in the clean energy sector for a panel discussion on the move towards a low-carbon economy.

As in many technical sectors, women working in electricity are under-represented, and continue to face barriers that limit their advancement or desire to remain in the sector. These barriers may include conscious or unconscious discrimination, a lack of female role models, or workplace culture and practices that erode an inclusive workplace. Integrating women into workplaces that employ skilled workers requires more than just opening the doors to female employees. Paradigm shifts require repeated focus and attention.

"Diversity breeds innovation. Research has consistently shown that diverse teams are more creative and innovative, while better representing the customers they serve." said Michelle Branigan, EHRC CEO. "Our objective is to accelerate the rate of change, so that women working in trades' and technology careers become the norm, and truly reflective of the society we live in today. In addition, we believe that organizations who take the lead in creating a culture of equality and fairness, will open their doors to a wider pool of top talent which will inevitably be reflected in their bottom line."

Gender equality matters because our economy needs the talents of all Canadians to thrive and grow. " said Maryam Monsef, Minister of Status of Women. "I applaud this initiative by Electricity

Human Resources Canada. By working together with employers in the electricity industry, they will help build a workplace culture that attracts, supports and promotes women at all levels. This is more than just an investment in women — it is an investment in the future of the industry.”

Accord Signatories – Supporters of Change

Thank you to those founding organizations who are championing diversity and have signed on to the Accord: Ontario Power Generation, Alectra Inc., Power Workers' Union, Algonquin College, Society of Energy Professionals, ENMAX, International Brotherhood Electrical Workers (IBEW) and Hydro Ottawa, and Accord advocates: The Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists, Electricity Distributors Association (EDA), Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance (CEEA), Energy Council of Canada and Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE).

About the Leadership Accord on Gender Diversity

This Accord was developed by EHRC and the Connected Women steering committee, a group of industry stakeholders who are working to develop a national mentorship program for women in the sector (to be launched May 2017).

To learn more visit <http://electricityhr.ca/our-work/projects-programmes/connected-women/>

About Electricity Human Resources Canada

Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC) is Canada's most trusted source of objective human resources information and tools to help the Canadian electricity industry match workforce supply and demand. EHRC helps to build a better workforce by strengthening the ability of the Canadian electricity industry to meet current and future needs for a highly skilled, safety-focused, diverse and productive workforce. For more information, visit <http://www.ElectricityHR.ca>.

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