

Letter To The Editor:

Dear Editor:

Pickering Council is aware of a recent video published by Councillor Lisa Robinson, criticizing the City's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Marisa Carpino, and making unfounded and inappropriate remarks on Ms. Carpino's character and intentions.

These statements are not only unwarranted, but also undermine the professionalism and integrity of our organization.

We wish to reaffirm our unwavering confidence in, and full support of, Ms. Carpino. This confidence extends to the City's Senior Leadership Team and all the dedicated employees of the City of Pickering. Together, they have consistently demonstrated their commitment to the highest standards of public service.

Ms. Carpino's conduct as Chief Administrative Officer is exemplary, and over the course of her almost 30 years of service to Pickering, she has consistently demonstrated commendable performance and unwavering dedication to the best interests of the City and its residents. Her actions are firmly aligned with the vision and values outlined in Pickering's Strategic Plan, characterized by integrity, honesty, and good faith.

Under Ms. Carpino's administrative leadership, Pickering has flourished as a dynamic, inclusive, and connected community. Her efforts have ensured that the City delivers outstanding services efficiently and responsibly, addressing the diverse needs of its residents.

The achievements of Pickering under her stewardship are widely recognized, highlighted by its place on The Globe and Mail's list of Canada's 100 Most Livable Cities for two consecutive years. Moreover, Ms. Carpino was recently honoured with the prestigious distinction of being the inaugural CAO of the Year by the national publication Municipal World - a testament to her exemplary leadership and contributions.

We strongly urge Councillor Robinson to retract her comments and extend a personal apology to Ms. Carpino and the employees of the City of Pickering. Such actions would reflect the principles of accountability and respect that are essential in public office.

The City of Pickering remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering an inclusive, collaborative, and respectful environment. The well-being of our community is, and will always be, our highest priority. Moving forward, we will continue to uphold the values of transparency, professionalism, and ethical leadership as we diligently serve the residents of Pickering with dedication and integrity.

Kevin Ashe, Mayor

Maurice Brenner, Regional Councillor, Ward 1

Linda Cook, Regional Councillor, Ward 2

David Pickles, Regional Councillor, Ward 3

Mara Nagy, City Councillor, Ward 2

Shaheen Butt, City Councillor, Ward 3

Dear Editor:

Federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault recently amended his edict that Canada's electricity generation and distribution system achieve "net-zero" CO 2 emissions by 2035, likely because Alberta Premier Danielle Smith finally made Guilbeault's Liberal government colleagues realize this goal was impossible (as well as politically toxic). The question now is: does Guilbeault shoving the net-zero goalposts out to 2050 make the impossible possible? Guilbeault claims—and appears to believe—that a net-zero grid is critical to stopping climate change. But just because Guilbeault thinks things does not make them true. Canada's electrical grid currently emits an estimated 47 megatonnes (Mt) of CO 2 annually. To eliminate these emissions, "all" we need to do is replace the electricity currently generated using fossil fuels with one or more of the other significant available sources—hydro, nuclear, wind or solar.

Last year Canada produced 127 terrawatt-hours (equal to 127 million megawatt-hours) of electricity using fossil fuels, about 20% of Canada's overall power output. That much electricity could theoretically be replaced by a source with the capacity to produce 14,500 megawatts of electricity continuously, 100% of the time, all year.

That's not how electrical generation works, of course; all power sources produce some fraction of their rated output (the "capacity factor"). Maintenance has to be done, hydro reservoirs needs to be refilled, the wind only blows part of the time, etc. Based on actual performance in 2016-2023, capacity factors were: hydro 53.2%, nuclear 73.2%, wind 28.9% and solar 14.1%.

This let's us determine the new capacity required for each source to replace the 127 terrawatt- hours generated from fossil fuels. For hydro, it would require 28 projects comparable to B.C.'s new Site C dam or Newfoundland's recent Muskrat Falls facility. That's a vast undertaking costing around \$400 billion and taking at least 45 years even if Canada could muster the capacity and will to work on nearly 10 dams at a time.

For nuclear, it would require three facilities the size of Ontario's enormous Bruce Nuclear Generating Station, totalling 24 individual reactors, costing perhaps \$60 billion, and taking at least 35 years if, again, Canada could somehow build batches of eight large reactors at a time.

For wind, it would require 167 projects the size of Alberta's Blackspring Ridge Wind Farm, totalling a mind-boggling 26,500 turbines, costing \$127 billion and requiring 85 years based on Canada's recent average increase in installed capacity. And for solar, it would require 220 projects the size of Alberta's Travers Solar project, the country's largest, entailing 290 million solar panels covering an area of 3,000 km². This would cost \$150 billion and could not come close to being finished by 2050. (Wind and solar power being severely intermittent and unpredictable, vast amounts of expensive battery storage would also need to be built.)

What we have, in short, is a costly and virtually unachievable boondoggle—regardless of whether the target year is 2035, 2050 or even 2075.

And this is before we consider that Guilbeault has also mandated that by 2035 only electric vehicles (EVs) will be sold and by 2050 Canada as a country must be net-zero, so that among other things the approximately 8 million homes currently heated with fossil fuels will have to be converted to electric heat.

Space prevents me from going over my data and calculations here, but getting Canada to 100% EV sales by 2035 would require another 15%-53% of the electricity currently generated by fossil fuels, while heating those 8 million homes would demand 85% of the power now generated by fossil fuels (and this does not account for the heating needs of new homes built during this time). Together, EVs and heat pumps will demand additional electricity at least equal to that currently supplied by fossil fuels in Canada. Meaning, you can double all of the above numbers. (And I'm still leaving out increases in electricity demand due to growth in Canada's population or power-hungry industries like AI data centres.)

All of this shifts my previous assessment of "costly and virtually unachievable boondoggle" to "ruinous and utterly unachievable madness." But don't take my word for it: let's look at Guilbeault's own figures. As Blacklock's Reporter first reported, a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement quietly issued by Guilbeault's office just before Christmas concluded that, "The required costs to build and maintain Canada's electricity system to meet expected growth in demand is estimated to be approximately \$690 billion between 2024 and 2050 in present value terms." Much of this demand growth, the government document notes, will come from meeting climate-change mandates like switching to all-EVs. Note also the term "present value", which indicates the cost estimate has been discounted to today's dollars. The nominal amounts that will be spent over this time thus probably total \$1 trillion or even more. That's "real money" – even to a Liberal!

Still, let's say that by some miracle Guilbeault's fever dreams could be made a reality. Would a net-zero Canadian electricity grid that eliminated the aforementioned 47 Mt of annual CO 2 emissions have any effect on climate change?

By 2035 China (if its emissions continue growing as they have since 1990) will have increased its annual emissions by 4,215 Mt – 90 times the amount by which Canada will have reduced its emissions. Between now and 2035 China will have emitted enough total CO 2 all by itself—over 181,500 Mt—to raise the atmospheric concentration of CO 2 by over 23 parts per million. This enormous gap between Canada's puny and China's vast emissions will more than double by 2050. The likelihood of achieving even Guilbeault's revised 2050 edict is sufficiently small as to be (as they say in engineering) for all practical purposes zero. Moreover, it is a fool's errand under any likely variation of the scheme, since it will have no discernible impact on climate change. Guilbeault—or his bosses—should scrap the net-zero power grid edict entirely and, while they're at it, the EV mandate and the national net-zero plan.

Jim Mason

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How Cybersecurity And Technology Jobs Can Equal Success For An Autistic Individual

by Kadin McElwain:

My father always told me that the technology field is a great career field for autistic individuals to get employment. Of course, I settled with something in the communications field, as I would be doing something I'm passionate about. But recently, it's come to my attention that technology would be perfect for me, an autistic individual, to find work. So in a society that's driven by technology, where do autistic individuals come into play? How can an autistic individual's skills make the technology field a perfect industry to work in? Here are three examples of cybersecurity and technology equaling success for an autistic individual.

Example One: Not Needing To Socialize As Much:

One of the biggest problems for autistic individuals in our society is the lack of social skills that they may have. All individuals, especially those on the spectrum, want friends and companionship. In fact, it's human nature to want companionship. The problem for autistic individuals is that they may be overwhelmed in social situations and may have a fear of rejection. Therefore, it may be hard for them to be able to make friends, which can impact them on an interprofessional level as well. This can result in a low quality of life as well, in all forms.

This is where a career in technology or cybersecurity comes in. There are a few technology jobs where you have to go into the office to do your work. But you don't necessarily have to interact with anybody face to face while you do the work unless it's during an employee break or a major meeting with your boss about a potential promotion. If the technology job is remote, that's even better for autistic individuals. Not only do they not have to go into the office to do their work, but they'll also have the ability to do the job in the comfort of their own home. This can ensure that the job is both enjoyable and comfortable for the individual.

Example Two: Routines, Routines, Routines:

If there is one thing that is sacred to an autistic individual, it's having a proper routine and sticking with it. Whether it's having the same things in your morning coffee every day, immediately rushing to do your morning chores after said coffee, or listening to the same song every day, having that routine is just as important to an autistic individual as breathing. With a majority of jobs, things can change expeditiously and the routine could be thrown off multiple times. Powerpoint presentations may need to be given on the third Tuesday of every other month, business taxes may need to be filed on Tuesday, yet are due on Wednesday night, and there could even be a major PR crisis that needs to be dealt with before anything else! As a result of the constant change in routine, the autistic individual could feel overwhelmed.

But with a job in the technology field, your routine is mostly the same. You clock in for the day, go to your cubicle to do your work, have lunch, and go home. There may be one or two days out of the month when you do something outside of the routine, such as an employee team-building exercise or a company picnic. But these aren't stressful routine-altering events but rather enjoyable events that have little to no effect on your work routine. When you have a career in technology, your routine will be the same and you will never have a severe routine-altering event that stresses you out. This makes the field a successful one for autistic individuals to break into and thrive.

Example Three: A Platform To Use Your Heightened Sense Of Concentration:

Autistic individuals have a heightened sense of concentration when it comes to certain tasks and topics that they enjoy. Sometimes, people with autism can spend hours researching a topic they enjoy and spend all night on projects they're working on for school or work because they are dedicated to the tasks or topics at hand. A huge issue with most industries is that there is no room to concentrate on only one task or topic. Especially in today's society, you have to know 72 different trades or more to even be considered for an interview. Some of these trades, such as knowing four different languages, knowing how to use seven different platforms, and knowing how to fix a copy machine, can take months, if not years, to fully master. This can disqualify autistic individuals from jobs at best and cause stress while on the job at worst.

With a job in the technology field, you can use your heightened sense of concentration as an autistic individual to focus on completing one task, as opposed to multiple tasks at the same time. The task at hand is simply to make sure all things on the technological side of the business are running as smoothly as possible and to make sure any threats to company security are eliminated. There's no need to learn over 100 different tasks to get the job or to learn new tasks while on the job that could take months to learn and stress you out. You get to use your heightened sense of concentration exclusively on making sure the network of a company runs smoothly. This can result in an enjoyable experience and success in your career.

To conclude, cybersecurity and the tech field can be great industries for autistic individuals to establish a career for themselves. They don't have to socialize as much as they have to in other fields, they can have a stable routine, and they can use their heightened sense of concentration to complete the task at hand and make the experience as enjoyable as possible. That's not to say that autistic individuals aren't capable of having success in other fields. All individuals are capable of whatever they set their minds to, no matter what they're going through. However, a career in the technology field can help guarantee the success of an autistic individual in their career.