

Hello Louise,

I'll give you my comments from a sales perspective and someone who resides in Ontario.

My first observation when I walked into the meeting was why is BC Hydro (Power Smart) the only Utility company attending the meeting? That became crystal clear when I saw how important the corrosion test is. That makes perfect sense for a province like BC which borders the ocean. There is not a great deal of salt water or rain corrosion in the rest of Canada. I doubt the Ontario or Quebec would be really concerned about the corrosion test, yet it is front and center in our discussions.

I strongly recommend we have Utility representatives from Ontario and Quebec at the next meeting since over 1/3 of the total Canadian population lives in these two provinces and although I grew up out west I do understand where the buying power is in this country. BC accounts for just over 10% of the total power used for Xmas lights. We need to bring in the big boys. This would be like Montana writing the specs for this in the US and not consulting NY or CAL.

I was surprised how much time we spent discussing the life of these items. The average consumer looks at Xmas lights as decorative and disposable items. They make their purchases off trends in the market. When Icicles hit everyone wanted them, this year will bring something new without a doubt. If five years is the number, agree to it and move on.

For the new LED Energy Star approved Xmas lights the manufacturers will have to upgrade components and equipment, this will drive the price up and give an unfair advantage to the retailer that sells non-approved LED Xmas lights. As one of the major retailer's in the country said to me that day. "I'm not paying a penny more for these" Because of this we will need the large Utility players in Quebec and Ontario to subsidize the sales at store level.

Please keep in mind these are my views as a sales person that understands the flow of goods. I think we have taken our eye off the ball when it comes to this point. I'm not knocking the idea. I think it's a good one, but we must make sure we don't create a Cadillac when we only require a Volkswagen. At the end of the day we want the product to be safe and sell through!

Regards

Jim McCrea
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