



# Hydro-Québec: an electrifying tale

## HYDRO-QUÉBEC: A FORERUNNER IN THE FIELD OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

Environmental issues have become a major concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but already in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Québec was a precursor in the development of renewable energy. Its innovative approach is not surprising, given that Québec possesses over 40% of Canada’s water resources in the form of 130,000 watercourses and 1,000,000 lakes.

## THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS CREATING A QUÉBEC SYMBOL

Under the government of Adélard Godbout, Québec nationalized the electrical assets of the Montreal Light, Heat and Power Company and placed them under the management of the Quebec Hydroelectric Commission in order to supply electricity to municipalities, industrial and commercial enterprises, and private citizens at the lowest rates consistent with sound financial administration. On April 14, 1944, Hydro-Québec was born.

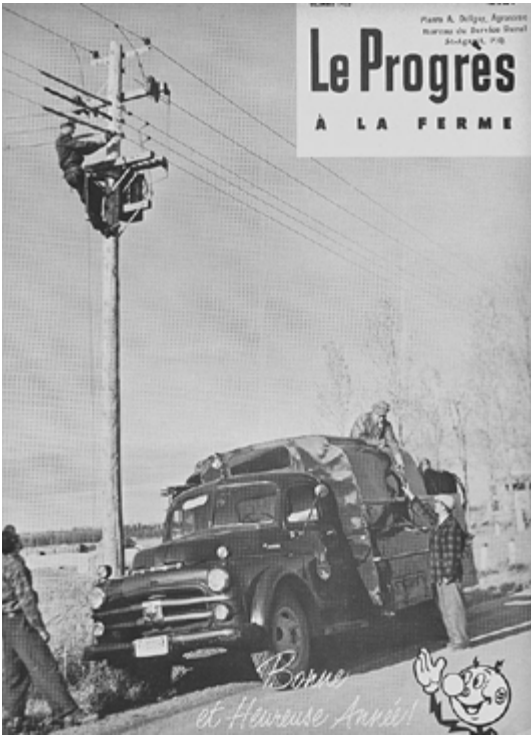
Its first actions were to improve the reliability of its transmission and distribution grid. It continued work to develop the Beauharnois generating station, commissioned in 1932, and launched its first major project: to harness the power of the Betsiamites river on the North Shore.

This gave Hydro-Québec an opportunity to hone its skills and show the world that it could transmit electrical energy over large distances at a voltage of 315 kV, a record at the time.



Picture : © Archives d'Hydro-Québec

Logo used by Hydro-Québec from 1944 to 1964.



Picture : © Archives d'Hydro-Québec

The monthly magazine *Le Progrès à la ferme* promoted rural electrification in the 1950s.



Picture : © Archives d'Hydro-Québec

## CONSOLIDATION OF HYDRO-QUÉBEC’S ACTIVITIES

At the request of the government led by Maurice Duplessis, Hydro-Québec focused on the large-scale electrification of rural regions in Québec, but it was only under the government of Jean Lesage, in the early 1960s, that Hydro-Québec completed its nationalization of the province’s private electricity producers and distributors.

Thanks to its major hydroelectric projects on the North Shore and in Northern Québec, Hydro-Québec began to play a key role in Québec’s economic development.

Aerial view of the Manic-5 construction site in 1966.

## HYDRO-QUÉBEC TODAY

Hydro-Québec is recognized today as a leader in the field of hydroelectricity and large-scale power grids. It exports clean, renewable energy and applies its expert knowledge and innovations both within and outside Québec.

A source of pride for the province, Hydro-Québec makes a significant contribution to Québec’s collective wealth and plays a central role in the creation of a low-carbon economy.

Today, Québec has more than over 60 hydroelectric generating stations.

Among the largest are the six stations listed below:

NAME	WATERSHED	WATERCOURSE	INSTALLED CAPACITY (MW)	VERTICAL HEAD (M)	COMMISSIONING
Beauharnois	Saint-Laurent	Lac Saint-François et canal de Beauharnois	1900	24,39	1932-1961
La Grande-2-A	La Grande	La Grande Rivière	2106	138,5	1991-1992
La Grande-3	La Grande	La Grande Rivière	2417	79	1982-1984
La Grande-4	La Grande	La Grande Rivière	2779	116,7	1984-1986
Manic-5	Manicouagan	Rivière Manicouagan	1596	141,8	1970-1971
Robert-Bourassa	La Grande	La Grande Rivière	5616	137,16	1979-1981