

ONTARIO HYDRO ARCHIVES

by

R. N. BEATTY*

Although there is no building, nor even a department, called Hydro Archives, responsibility for Archives in Ontario Hydro has been, since 1952, a part of a larger responsibility for records management throughout the organization. The supervision of the responsibilities of the Secretary of the Commission.

The goals of Ontario Hydro's records management program may be summarized as follows:

1. Provision of expert advice on systems for recording, storing, and retrieving valuable information.
2. Provision of secure storage for very valuable information.
3. Provision of economical out-of-office storage for inactive information.
4. Scheduling of inactive records for transfer to storage and obsolete records for destruction.
5. Preservation of historically valuable records.

The central records section of records management provides:

1. Vault storage for legal documents and valuable papers.
2. Low-cost fire-safe storage for inactive records.
3. Microfilming service for space-saving and distant storage of duplicate microfilm of the most important records.

One of the low-cost storage areas has been supplied with controlled atmosphere, and here most of Ontario Hydro's archives material, largely on microfilm, is being stored.

The 1960 publication of **The People's Power**, a history of Ontario Hydro, by Merrill Denison, revealed that while there was ample documentation for the period since the founding of the Commission in 1906, there was relatively much less for the previous twenty years during which many municipal electrical utilities were founded in Ontario. An attempt is being made to collect all the information available, not only about the electrical utility industry but also about the origin and development of public utility commissions in Ontario.

*Mr. Beatty of the Ontario Hydro Archives participated in a symposium on business archives at the 1965 meeting of the Archives Section, Canadian Historical Association. These notes by Mr. Beatty are based upon his presentation.