

Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - December 11, 2017

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MEDIA SCAN HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

December 11, 2017

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Print Coverage

Woodstock Sentinel-Review: Rate hike ask prompts public meeting; The Ontario Energy Board will hold a public meeting on a possible rate increase for Erie Thames Powerlines customers; A1 / Front; 2017.12.11

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Rate hike ask prompts public meeting: The Ontario Energy Board will hold a public meeting on a possible rate increase for Erie Thames Powerlines customers

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will be holding a community meeting Tuesday in Ingersoll at Unifor Local 88 Union Hall.

Erie Thames Powerlines applied for an increase in electricity rates - an average of \$2.70 per month - starting May 1, 2018.

The OEB is hosting the public meeting to provide local residents an opportunity to ask questions and give their opinions on the possible rate increase. Customers of Erie Thames Powerlines can make brief presentations during the meeting and take part in a question and answer section. People interested in making a presentation can sign up by contacting the OEB at registrar@oeb.ca, calling 1-877-632-2727 or visit www.oeb.ca/participate.

"We control costs by reviewing and testing the requested rate change through an open and robust review process," OEB registrar Kristi Sebalj said in a media release.

"We hold utilities to account, keeping rates as low as possible, while making sure utilities have what they need to keep the lights on," the release added.

A media release from the OEB wrote the increase "relate(s) to its (Erie Thames Powerlines) distribution business and do not reflect any credits or other changes resulting from the Fair Hydro Act, 2017."

The release says the meeting is to inform people on Erie Thames Powerlines costs and rate application, and how people can get involved in the OEB's rate review process and offer comments on the Erie Thames Powerlines application.

The release noted the OEB has just started to look at the rate application, with the review process normally taking between six to nine months to allow all parties a chance to participate.

"It's up to the utility to prove to the OEB why it needs a rate increase to cover these costs," Sebalj said in the release. "Utilities rarely get all they ask for."

The OEB has reviewed more than 130 major rate applications from 2009 to 2016 and reduced rate increase an average of about 40 per cent, the release said, and have held 30 community meetings since

2016.

Erie Thames Powerlines serves customers throughout Oxford County, with their website saying Tavistock, Embro, East-Zorra, Ingersoll, Beachville, Burgessville, norwich and Otterville fall in its territory of more than 18,000 customers.

The OEB is Ontario's independent energy regulator for electricity and natural gas. The organization makes final decisions on energy rates after energy providers apply for changes in prices.

To read Erie Thames Powerlines application, visit: <http://bit.ly/ErieThames>.

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