

Today's News - Thursday, June 22, 2017

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Today, Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy, issued the following statement in response to the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) announcement to lower electricity prices for residential and small business customers on the Regulated Price Plan (RPP):

"Premier Wynne committed to reducing electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for households across the province, and today represents the next stage in the implementation of Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan. The Ontario Energy Board Regulated Price Plan announcement means that the average 25 per cent reduction will be in place effective July 1 for all households in Ontario, providing real and significant relief on hydro costs. As many as half a million small businesses and farms will also benefit. The 25 per cent includes the eight per cent rebate, equal to the provincial portion of the HST that took effect on January 1, 2017. Our plan also holds any increases in electricity bills to the rate of inflation for four years. Low-income Ontarians and those living in eligible rural or remote communities will receive even greater reductions, as much as 40 to 50 per cent on their bills through the already expanded Ontario Electricity Support Program and the broadening of the Rural or Remote Rate Protection program, while the delivery charge portion of residential electricity bills will be removed for on-reserve First Nations communities. The OEB will continue to serve in its important role, which includes establishing reasonable rates and protecting energy consumers, while also ensuring proper investments are made to maintain long-term system reliability. Ontario's 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan, to be released later this summer, will focus on taking additional costs out of the system, and address long-term affordability. Our government committed to providing significant and real relief on hydro bills for people across Ontario, and we have delivered on this pledge."

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Also today:

- The province is helping families celebrate Ontario's 150th anniversary by expanding the Fun Pass for 2017. The Fun Pass includes coupons that give local elementary school-aged children free admission to 18 provincial attractions, such as the Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Science Centre and Science North. This year, the Fun Pass has been enhanced so that two kids will get in free when accompanied by a paying adult or senior. Families will also get \$5 off the regular price of a daily parking permit at most Ontario Parks day-use areas. Fun Pass booklets are being given to children in participating school boards and private schools this month. Ontario parents can also access the Fun Pass online at Ontario.ca/funpass. Helping more kids and their families experience provincial attractions is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes historic new investments in health care, including free medications for everyone 24 and under who has OHIP coverage through the OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare Program, providing free average tuition to over 210,000 students starting fall 2017 and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great

job, helping 100,000 more kids aged 0–4 access quality, licensed child care, making everyday life more affordable by reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent on average through our Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to make housing more affordable for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.