

ENERGY media calls

From: "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>
To: "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>
Cc: "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>
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Hi all,

Please find media calls for Energy and agencies below. Claudine Brule from RC followed up on Patrick Brown's letter, but nothing else to flag. Let us know if you have any questions.

Colin

Minister's Office: 1 inquiry

Topic: Hydro One delivery rate application

Reporter & Outlet: Claudine Brule, Radio-Canada

Response Type: Minister statement

Reporter's Questions:

We are looking for comments from the minister on the proposed rate increase submitted by Hydro One.

The PC suggests this will cancel the rebate that the Fair Hydro Plan will offer this summer.

Response:

Regardless of the outcome of the OEB's process, Hydro One customers will not see an increase to their bills. We've been clear that Ontarians will see a significant decrease in their overall bills this summer through Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan.

Our Fair Hydro Plan provides immediate relief in the short-term by reducing electricity bills by 25% on average for all Ontarians - up to 40-50% if you're a rural or low-income Hydro One customer. It then holds rates to inflation for the following four years, managing affordability in the medium-term. Our 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan will show Ontario families and businesses a snapshot of our future energy system, including supply, demand, and affordability, over the longer term.

We've also been extremely clear that Hydro One – like all utilities in Ontario – does not have the power to set its own distribution rates. It must submit an application with the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), an independent, quasi-judicial body with a mandate to protect Ontario energy consumers. The OEB does not approve all applications, and the Fair Hydro Plan will hold any increases to the rate of inflation for four years.

We also know that Patrick Brown loves to distract from the fact that he has absolutely no plan when it comes to managing electricity rates. In fact last week he voted against the Fair Hydro Plan, meaning he voted against reducing electricity bills by 25% on average, and holding electricity rates to inflation - which is exactly what his letter seems to ask for. Nearly 100 days ago Patrick Brown said his energy plan was coming soon, but we are still waiting to hear how he would reduce electricity rates.

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Ministry: 1 inquiry

Topic : Seasonal Class Customers

Reporter & Outlet : Graeme Frisque, Metroland Media (Georgetown)

Response Type : Ministry spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

How are seasonal class customers are affected by the Fair Hydro Plan?

Response:

TBD

Agencies: 3 inquiries

Agency: OEB

Topic : Collection of Accounts

Reporter & Outlet : Brian Hill, Global TV

Response Type : OEB spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

1. Is the Collection of Accounts service charge one of the "well-defined Specific Service Charges" described in Section 11.0 , Para 2 of the OEB 2006 Handbook (see below)?

"This 2006 Handbook provides a set of well-defined Specific Service Charges that could be provided by a distributor, together with either a specific level of charge or a specific basis for the determination of the charge. All distributors should apply the basic set of services uniformly. There should be no difference in the application of these services among distributors."

2. When will Phase 1 of the OEB customer service review be completed and when can consumers expect to know the results of this review?

Response:

TBC:

The OEB initiated the Customer Service Rules review in 2017 because of our desire to evaluate where opportunities to improve customer service in Ontario could be found. That review is underway and we are on schedule to deliver a report on this in the fall of this year and disconnections, fees and related practices have been identified as a priority within this review.

In 2006 when the handbook in question was published, it was intended as a guide. It is not a part of the DSC.

By contrast the OEB showed in 2011 that we were following a cost based approach to these and other questions whereby LDCs would need to justify their fee as part of their cost application and in doing so demonstrate how their services including fees were appropriate.

At the same time in 2011, the OEB introduced a comprehensive Customer Service Rules notice and it is that document that we are now reviewing to identify where improvements can be made. We look forward to sharing the results of this review in the fall.

Agency: OEB

Topic: Hydro One delivery rate application

Reporter & Outlet: Mike Ebbeling, CKDR(Dryden)

Response Type: OEB spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

1. What does the OEB do?
2. What is the timeline for the Hydro One application?
3. What is the OEB hoping to accomplish at its community meetings?

Response:

Pending approval:

1. What does the OEB do?

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is an independent regulator and impartial public agency. We regulate the natural gas and electricity sectors in Ontario. Our responsibilities include setting delivery rates for both electricity and natural gas. We do that by reviewing applications filed by electricity and natural gas utilities to change their rates. We set rates that are reasonable and appropriate by considering what the utility needs. We also set and enforce rules and empower consumers by providing meaningful and timely information. Our mission is to promote a viable, sustainable and efficient energy sector that serves the public interest and helps consumers obtain reliable energy services that are cost effective.

2. What is the timeline for the Hydro One application?

The OEB has just started the review of Hydro One's rate application. No decision has been reached.

Our review will take about six to nine months. The OEB follows a number of steps when reviewing a major distribution rate application. These include:

- Notifying consumers by placing a notice of application in newspapers

- Holding OEB Community meetings in communities served by the utility
- Inviting consumers to submit letters of comment for consideration by the decision-makers
- Providing funding to intervenors representing consumers so they can have a say in the process and take an active role in the hearing.
- Holding a hearing which involves written questions (interrogatories) on the application and a technical conference. Many major rate applications also involve an oral hearing before a panel of OEB members. The OEB will hold an oral hearing to review Hydro One's application.

Starting next week, we will be holding OEB Community meetings across Ontario to provide Hydro One customers with an opportunity to learn more and ask questions about Hydro One's distribution rate application. A meeting will be held in Dryden on Tuesday, June 27, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall on 43 Queen St. in Dryden. Details about other meetings scheduled across Ontario will be posted on the OEB website at: <https://www.oeb.ca/participate/community-meetings>.

We encourage all Hydro One consumers to attend our meetings to learn more about their utility's rate application.

3. What is the OEB hoping to accomplish at its community meetings?

The OEB is holding community meetings to make it easier for consumers to participate in our hearing process. We want to hear consumers' concerns first-hand and we want consumers to be able to learn more and better understand what their utility is asking for and why. The comments received at these meetings help inform the OEB's final decision.

The OEB has a rigorous, open and inclusive rate review process. We carefully review and test applications. As a result, utilities rarely get all they ask for. In the last 8 years, we've reviewed over 100 major rate applications and reduced requested rate increases by an average of about 40 percent. Overall, the Ontario Energy Board has kept the annual growth in average distribution rates close to the rate of inflation during the same period.

Since 2016 the OEB has held 14 meetings on major rate applications in communities across Ontario.

Agency: IESO

Topic: Sponsored Interviews

Reporter & Outlet: Various radio stations

Response type: IESO spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

The IESO is taking part in a series of taped-to-air sponsored interviews to discuss conservation efforts in the province and the positive effects Save on Energy is having with businesses.

The interviews are scheduled to air next week. Dates and times for when they will air are still to be confirmed.

Attached is the interview schedule .

Response:

Key messages that will be delivered during the interviews are as follows:

High-Level Key Messages

- Save on Energy is Ontario's energy - efficiency platform, providing programs and services that have provided Ontarians with opportunities and tools to help them better understand and manage their energy use.
- Conservation and energy efficiency are important contributors to the reliability of Ontario's electricity system.
- Conservation is our first priority. It's the most cost-effective resource available.
- Through conservation programs and changes to codes and standards, Ontario has saved 12.7 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity in the past 10 years, which is equivalent to about half the annual electricity demand in the City of Toronto.
- Through Save on Energy, there is a program for every business, big or small, to reduce their energy consumption and become more energy efficient, including:
 - incentive programs to help businesses change out or upgrade to more efficient equipment.
 - program funding to help businesses train their staff in energy management, which in turn is resulting in improved productivity, better work environments and lower operating costs.
- Thousands of businesses, big and small, across Ontario have participated in Save on Energy projects.
- Businesses that take advantage of energy - efficiency rebates and projects not only lower their energy costs but find other benefits as well, such as safer, brighter work environments, less noise and vibration and better looking product.
- To get started, visit saveonenergy.ca or contact your local hydro company to learn more about programs available in your area.
