

# RE: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

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**From:** "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>  
**To:** "McPhail, Blane (OPO)" <blane.mcphail@ontario.ca>  
**Cc:** "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>, "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)" <kevin.denheijer@ontario.ca>  
**Date:** Mon, 25 Sep 2017 14:04:38 -0400

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No worries. We'll dig into it. Here's the final version we plan to send:

*As Minister Thibeault stated, the Ontario government has a responsibility to raise awareness and communicate information about programs and services that affect Ontarians. This includes informing Ontarians of changes to their electricity bills so that they can use this information to plan for the future as they manage their household budgets. All ads direct Ontarians to a dedicated website ([www.Ontario.ca/fairhydroplan](http://www.Ontario.ca/fairhydroplan)) where they can learn more about what these changes mean to them.*

*The Ontario Electricity Support program (OESP), for example, requires customers to sign up for the program. Latest numbers from the Ontario Energy Board on September 24<sup>th</sup> affirm that 232,115 customers are already benefitting from the program. This is an increase of 5,181 over September 1st.*

*The OESP is an income-tested, application based program that lowers electricity costs for the most vulnerable consumers and families, providing a rebate directly on bills. There are two scales: one with basic credits, and an enhanced credit for Indigenous people or those who use electric heat or certain electrically intensive medical devices.*

*For an illustrative example, through the Fair Hydro Plan Ontario increased the OESP by 50 per cent, meaning that a single, low-income consumer who receives the lowest credit amount would get an increase from \$30 to \$45 per month (\$540 per year, an increase of \$180), and the lowest credit for the enhanced scale would increase from \$45 to \$68 (\$816 per year, an increase of \$276).*

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**From:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Sent:** September-25-17 2:02 PM  
**To:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** RE: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

Thanks for the chat. As discussed, let's drop "wet signature" and change to it "already benefitting from the program." Would be good to have the YoY increase of Ontarians benefitting from this program to share moving forward too.

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**From:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Sent:** September-25-17 1:40 PM  
**To:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** RE: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

Hey Blane – I just had another conversation with an OEB analyst and apparently the total applications

include duplicates, people who have moved, etc. She also said the in a YOY comparison of OESP signups, a deep dive may not see a notable increase in participants. This is something we'll have our officials dig into. In the meantime, I suggest pulling back our messaging a bit so that we don't have to walk anything back later. Here's what we could use regarding signups:

*The Ontario Electricity Support program, for example, requires a wet signature to qualify for the program. Latest numbers from the Ontario Energy Board affirm that 232,115 applicants have been accepted to the program.*

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**From:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Sent:** September-25-17 1:24 PM  
**To:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** RE: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

Thx – think there are just a couple words missing from that line though

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**From:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Sent:** September-25-17 1:13 PM  
**To:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** Re: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

232K accepted out of 358K applications since the inception of the program.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

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**From:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2017 1:09 PM  
**To:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** Re: Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

Is it 232k accepted out of 358k? Or 232k accepted with another 358k applied?

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**From:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)  
**Sent:** Monday, September 25, 2017 12:40 PM  
**To:** McPhail, Blane (OPO)  
**Cc:** @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
**Subject:** Gallery follow-up: OESP signups

Hi Blane,

CP is asking for updated OESP signup numbers following today's scrum. Below is what I suggest sending, in addition to other media who scrummed the Minister on ads (CTV, QPB, RC, CBC). We'll need to send this ASAP.

*As Minister Thibeault stated, the Ontario government has a responsibility to raise awareness and*

*communicate information about programs and services that affect Ontarians. This includes informing Ontarians of changes to their electricity bills so that they can use this information to plan for the future as they manage their household budgets. All ads direct Ontarians to a dedicated website ([www.Ontario.ca/fairhydroplan](http://www.Ontario.ca/fairhydroplan)) where they can learn more about what these changes mean to them.*

*The Ontario Electricity Support program, for example, has seen signup numbers increasing as a result of advertising and other communications efforts. Latest numbers from the Ontario Energy Board 232,115 have been accepted to the program of a total 358,906 applications submitted.*

*The OESP is an income-tested, application based program that lowers electricity costs for the most vulnerable consumers and families, providing a rebate directly on bills. There are two scales: one with basic credits, and an enhanced credit for Indigenous people or those who use electric heat or certain electrically intensive medical devices.*

*For an illustrative example, through the Fair Hydro Plan Ontario increased the OESP by 50 per cent, meaning that a single, low-income consumer who receives the lowest credit amount would get an increase from \$30 to \$45 per month (\$540 per year, an increase of \$180), and the lowest credit for the enhanced scale would increase from \$45 to \$68 (\$816 per year, an increase of \$276). Ontario is exploring automatic qualification for customers who are enrolled in other provincial low-income social programs, however the program currently needs applicants to provide a wet signature to qualify for the program.*

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