

Enhancing Electricity Support Programs

To help Ontario's most vulnerable electricity consumers, pending legislation, the following electricity support programs will be enhanced

Broadening Rural or Remote Electricity Rate Protection (RRRP)

- The RRRP is provided to a number of rural residential customers in Ontario.
- The Province is moving forward in broadening the RRRP to provide delivery charge relief to not only the current customers but also to those LDCs with some of the highest rates. Government will support harmonizing distribution rates for eligible LDCs at the lowest rate of the selected group. This will lead to Delivery Charge relief for over 700,000 residential customers.
- The Province is also moving forward in having the RRRP be funded by the taxbase.

Expand the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)

- The [OESP](#) is an income-tested, application based program that lowers electricity costs for the most vulnerable consumers, 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.
- Increasing the OESP credits by 50% would mean that single, low-income consumers who receive the lowest credit amount would get an increase from \$30 to \$45/ month (\$540/year), and the lowest credit for the enhanced scale would increase from \$45 to \$68 (\$816/year).
- The Province is moving forward to broadening the OESP to ensure the program uptake is as close as possible to 100% by:
 - Streamlining the application process to make it easier and quicker to get approval;
 - Increasing awareness of the program to eligible recipients; and
 - Exploring automatic qualifications for customers that are enrolled in other low-income support programs.

Establish a Local Distribution Company (LDC) Affordability Fund

- An "Affordability Fund" would be established to assist electricity customers who cannot qualify for low-income conservation programs such as the [Home Assistance Program](#).
- The LDC Affordability Fund would provide LDCs with an additional tool to help customers in need. LDCs would use the Fund to provide support to customers for energy efficiency improvements to help reduce their future electricity bills and avoid future disconnections.

First Nations Rate

- In 2016, [The Ontario Energy Board \(OEB\)](#) engaged with First Nations, including remote communities, the distributors serving them, and consumer groups such as the Low Income Energy Network.
- Following the engagement process the OEB recommends:
 - Eliminating the delivery charge for all on-reserve First Nations residential customers and removing the monthly service charge for customers of licensed distributors which charge a bundled rate. The OEB estimates this would provide residential customers an average

monthly benefit of \$85 at a total annual cost of up to \$20 million in funding through the tax-base.

- Automatically qualify on-reserve First Nations residential customers (~21,500 customers).
- Enable greater information sharing between distributors and band councils to identify all on-reserve First Nations customers.
- Government intends to introduce legislation to implement this recommendation.

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