

Ontario Introduces Legislation to Reduce Hydro Bills

The Ontario government recently announced it is taking action to help families with the cost of everyday living, through legislation to reduce electricity bills. If passed, more than five million families, farms and small businesses could see bill reductions this coming January. To achieve the planned reductions, Ontario will offset the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax on electricity bills. This eight per cent (8%) rebate applies to all consumers eligible for the Regulated Price Plan and will provide the average family with \$130 annually.

Rural Consumers

For rural customers, who pay higher costs associated with the delivery of electricity, Ontario is providing an additional \$110 million in support for the Rural or Remote Rate Protection program (RRRP).

This proposed funding increase to RRRP and the eight percent rebate will result in electricity relief of approximately \$45 per month for eligible RRRP customers – a significant rate relief for Ontario's approximately 330,000 rural electricity consumers.

Commented [CS(1)]: These are just H1 R2 customers.

Businesses

For businesses, Ontario will be lowering the threshold for participating in the Industrial Conservation Initiative from 3 megawatts (MW) to 1 MW. This will give more businesses the opportunity to significantly reduce their costs by reducing consumption during peak periods.

These steps are the latest in a series of measures the Ontario government has taken to help ease pressure on Ontario electricity consumers. Earlier this year the province launched the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) and removed the Debt Retirement Charge (DRC), saving the average low-income family \$430 annually.

Existing Programs

Existing programs that help reduce bills for Ontario families include the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit, the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program, the Save on Energy Home Assistance Program, and the Northern Ontario Energy Credit. For more information on how these programs are offered, please contact [insert local distribution company name].

Ontario's investments are securing a clean supply of electricity, an electricity system that's ready for the future, and a healthier environment for generations to come. Since 2003, Ontario has remained committed to providing a safe, clean and reliable energy supply to Ontario homes and businesses. The heavy lifting is complete and an aging transmission infrastructure has been rebuilt. Ontario also fully eliminated coal-fired generation in 2014, which analysis showed was costing \$4.4 billion in health care expenses.