

## RE: Toronto Star: Hydro rates to remain stable through 2020: energy plan

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This is good.

**From:** Berry, James (ENERGY)  
**Sent:** October-26-17 10:59 AM  
**To:** Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)  
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**Subject:** Toronto Star: Hydro rates to remain stable through 2020: energy plan

## Hydro rates to remain stable through 2020: energy plan

In the first energy blueprint since 2013, the Liberal government said prices will actually be lower than forecast four years ago, thanks to the 25 per cent rebate known as the Fair Hydro Plan that took effect this past summer.



The Liberals say hydro prices will be lower than forecast four years ago — thanks to the 25 per cent rebate. (RENE JOHNSTON / TORONTO STAR) | ORDER THIS PHOTO  
By [ROBERT BENZIE](#) Queen's Park Bureau Chief  
Thu., Oct. 26, 2017

Ontario electricity rate hikes will be held to the rate of inflation over the next four years, according to the province's latest Long-Term Energy Plan.

In the first energy blueprint since 2013, the Liberal government said prices will actually be lower than forecast four years ago — thanks to the 25 per cent rebate known as the Fair Hydro Plan that took effect this past summer. The average monthly residential bill this year is \$127 — down from \$170 predicted in the last Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP).

In 2027, that monthly bill is anticipated to be \$181 — lower than the \$200 estimate from the 2013 LTEP. By 2035,

it should be \$193 a month.

“The projected residential price electricity will remain below the outlooks in the 2010 and 2013 LTEP,” the government said in the 155-page outlook.

“Projected electricity prices for large consumers will, on average, be in line with inflation over the forecast period,” it said.

Between 2021 and 2027, rates are expected to gradually rise by an average of 5 per cent annually.

“The 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan outlines our investments to date and how we plan to continue building an energy system with fairness and choice for people across the province,” Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault said Thursday at Queen’s Park.

Facing widespread outcry over rising hydro prices — and with an election set for June 7, 2018 — the government launched the so-called Fair Hydro Plan earlier this year.

Thibeault said it spreads the costs of \$70 billion in electricity infrastructure improvements from the past decade over a lengthier repayment period.

He likened it to refinancing a mortgage to have lower payments now but with those spread out over a longer period of time.

“The Fair Hydro Plan is a policy that reduces rates immediately and effectively,” said Thibeault.

“We’ve heard from families that they can’t handle the sharp increases that were taking place in previous years and are working to ensure that does not happen again,” he said.

With an election looming, Thibeault lashed out at the Progressive Conservatives and the New Democrats for not providing viable alternatives to the Liberals’ plans.

“Both parties voted against Ontario’s Fair Hydro Plan — the single largest rate reduction in the province’s history.”

Auditor general Bonnie Lysyk has estimated the \$39.4-billion scheme could cost Ontario ratepayers an additional \$4 billion in higher interest charges over 30 years.

There is some good news for many condominium residents in Thursday’s blueprint.

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB), the independent regulator that controls prices, will be given authority over 326,000 condo and apartment units in 2,500 buildings across the province that currently pay their bills to private companies that meter usage.

“Consumers have told both the province and the OEB that they would like to know more about how these decisions are made and what they are being asked to pay for,” the LTEP said.

“Improving consumer protection and strengthening the OEB’s regulatory powers ... would ensure that their fees and charges are just and reasonable and that customers served by these companies receive value for money.”

Overall, Ontario’s current electricity supply mix includes 53.5 per cent of generation coming from nuclear power, 21.3 per cent from water, 7.5 per cent from natural gas, 6.2 per cent from wind, and 2 per cent from solar.

The government estimates that the equivalent of 8.6 per cent of supply is coming from conservation efforts.

There are no new major energy projects announced in the plan — the Liberals believe existing infrastructure as well as increased small green-energy, such as roof-top solar panels, will be enough to meet demand over the next 18 years.