

Media Call Summary: June 6, 2017

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Date: Tue, 06 Jun 2017 17:02:29 -0400

Minister's Office: 2 inquiries

Topic : Hydro One rate application

Reporter & Outlet : Idil Mussa, CBC Ottawa

Response Type : Minister's spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

CBC Ottawa is doing a story on Hydro One's rate application.

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.

Topic : Green Energy Act policies

Reporter & Outlet : Laurence Martin, CBC Radio-Canada

Response Type : Minister's spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

I am the CBC reporter who just called you regarding wind turbines.

Basically, I am trying to figure out what kind of governmental programs are in place to encourage companies to invest/develop wind farms.

Are there some guaranteed prices? If I'm not mistaken, the Ontario government assisted some companies in building their wind infrastructure.

Response:

TBD

Agencies: 2 inquiries

Agency: OEB

Topic : Hydro One rate application

Reporter & Outlet : Idil Mussa, CBC Ottawa

Response Type : OEB spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

What is the review and decision-making process? How many times has Hydro One applied to increase their distribution rates in the last 5 years.

Response:

The OEB helps control costs for all consumers by reviewing requested distribution rate increases for electricity distributors, including Hydro One, through an open, robust and inclusive rate review process. We encourage all consumers to get involved and have their say in our rate decision-making.

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 the Ottawa area, in Rockland, on Tuesday, June 20, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Club Powers at the Columbian Hall at 954 Giroux Street. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. We encourage all Hydro One consumers to attend our meetings and tell us what they think about their utility's rate application. Dates, locations and times of other meetings across Ontario will be posted shortly to the OEB website at:

<https://www.oeb.ca/participate/community-meetings>.

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 across Ontario**
- **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. That will be the case with this application.**

The OEB's job is to review the application to make sure the utility's costs are justified and appropriate. We work hard to keep rates as low as possible while ensuring the system can run properly and be financially viable. Utilities rarely get all they ask for. In the last eight 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. The OEB expects distributors to operate more efficiently, plan better and make sure that spending is prioritized and paced appropriately. We expect distributors to know what their customers want before they file their rate applications, and to deliver long-term value for money.

Agency: OEB

Topic : Hydro One delivery rate application

Reporter & Outlet : Mike Abbeling, 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:

TBC:

- 1. The Ontario Energy Board is the province's independent regulator who sets distribution rates for electricity and natural gas providers in the province.**

The OEB helps control costs for all consumers by reviewing requested distribution rate increases for electricity distributors, including Hydro One, through an open, robust and inclusive rate review process. We encourage all consumers to get involved and have their say in our rate decision-making.

- 2. Hydro One applied to the OEB to adjust its Delivery rates for the years 2018 to 2022. Our goal is to ensure that Hydro One is delivering cost effective, efficient, reliable and responsive services to customers. The OEB Decision date for this case is slated for the end of December although it may only happen in early 2018.**

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 Owen Sound on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre, Christie Hare Shore Room at 1900 3rd Avenue East. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. We encourage all Hydro One consumers to attend our meetings and tell us what they think about their utility's rate application. Dates, locations and times of other meetings across Ontario will be posted shortly to the OEB website at:

<https://www.oeb.ca/participate/community-meetings>.

- 3. The OEB is the province's independent regulator actively engaged in giving consumers a voice in the planning and regulation of Ontario's energy sector.**

The OEB sets electricity rates through an open and accountable rate-setting process and encourages customers to participate in the process. This includes the community meeting process which helps the OEB better understand the voice of the consumer and the value a utility is delivering to their customers. Since 2016 the OEB has held xx meetings on major rate applications in communities across Ontario.

The OEB has just started the review of this rate application. No decision has been reached.

Our job is to review that application to make sure the utility's costs are justified and appropriate. We work hard to keep rates as low as possible while ensuring the system can run properly and be financially viable.

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.

Ministry: 1 inquiry

Topic : Broader Public Sector datasets

Reporter & Outlet : Ainslie Cruickshank, Toronto Star

Response Type : Ministry spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

Could tell me if the 2015 and 2016 datasets showing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions for the broader public sector are available?

Are large public sector emitters (ie. universities) subject to cap and trade?

Response:

TBD

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