

Media Call Summary: March 3, 2017

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Date: Mon, 06 Mar 2017 17:09:50 -0500

Media Call Summary

Ministry: 4 Inquiries

Topic: Energy and Water Use

Reporter & Outlet: Geoff Zochodne, QP Briefing

Response Type: Ministry Spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

Reporter saw a recent Ontario Gazette that the province's regulation requiring large buildings to report water and energy use will come into effect in July. Reporter asked if it is the government's intent for businesses to start reporting their usage starting this year? Reporter noted that they believe the regulation says that's the case for properties at least 250,000 square feet, that they must report their 2017 usage for 2018.

Reporter also attached and asked the following:
https://files.ontario.ca/books/ontariogazette_150_08.pdf

Why is the government doing this? What will the government do with the information? What costs are associated with the regulation? Who must comply?

Response:

TBD

Topic: Great Lakes Restoration Cuts

Reporter & Outlet: Riley Sparks, National Observer

Response Type: Ministry Spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

Reporter is working on a story about reports that President Trump hopes to cut funding to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which would include efforts to control invasive species.

Reporter is wondering if the Minister has any concerns about any impact this could have on OPG operations in general, and specifically on algae blooms and invasive species affecting OPG operations -- zebra mussels or others.

Response:

TBD

Topic: Fair Hydro Plan

Reporter & Outlet: Bob Stewart, Area News Magazine

Response Type: Ministry Spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

Reporter asked the following:

I write articles for the Area News magazine - a members publication of the Lake of the Woods District Property Owners Association.

For their next issue I've been asked to write a summary of the current and pending changes to Ontario's electricity system as it impacts customer bills.

Many of the 3,000 subscribers to the Area News are cottagers, or seasonal residents, of the Lake of the Woods Region and details on how the planned changes will impact them are of particular importance.

I am aware of OEB policy changes to move towards fixed monthly distribution charges and to have Hydro One - the primary LDC in our area - eliminate its Seasonal class by 2024.

These measures will result in significant increases for low volume electricity user cottagers.

In statements about the government's new plans to lower electrical bills overall, there was mention of assistance to cottagers which could result in unto 31% bill

savings.

I know they are benefiting now from the 8% PST rebate, and will benefit from the overall reduction in the commodity price of electricity and the reduction in Regulatory charges with the shift of Low Income Support and other support program levies from electricity bills to the province's general revenue fund, but I was wondering if there are any other measures, such as the enhanced Rural or Remote Rate Protection program that may apply to them going forward.

Under current provincial regulations they are ineligible for RRRP support as their cottages are not their primary residence.

Is this going to change under the new programs?

Response:

TBD

Topic: ICI

Reporter & Outlet: Barbara Carss, Property Management Magazine

Response Type: Ministry Spokesperson

Reporter's Questions:

Reporter asked the following:

1.) The announcement in the Ontario government's March 2 news release is rather ambiguous:

Ontario is expanding the Industrial Conservation Initiative (ICI) program by reducing the threshold from 1 mW [sic] to 500 kW and targeting more small manufacturing and industrial consumers.

Could I get a statement from the Ministry clarifying that this is exclusively for small manufacturing and industrial consumers?

2.) Since O.Reg 429/04 (via 366/16) revokes NAICS criteria as of July 1, 2017, will you be issuing another regulation to distinguish small manufacturing and industrial consumers in the 500 kW to 1 MW range? What's the timing for that?

Response:

TBD

Minister's Office : 0 Inquiries

Agency: 0 Inquiries