

KNOWLEDGE IS POWERFUL



ISSUE 2 – SPRING 2016

WHAT'S NEW?

The rising cost of power is not new, and unfortunately it seems to be a common occurrence in Ontario. On May 1, 2016 the Ontario Energy Board announced an increase with the cost of electricity causing an approximate \$3.00 increase per month for the average residential consumer. Unless you purchase electricity through a retailer, the cost of power is set by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB), and is known as the Regulated Price Plan (RPP). This latest cost of power rate increase has been attributed to the lower sales in electricity this past winter. There are many news articles out about the cost of power increases, the Ontario Energy Board website has more information on this topic and their justification for the time-of-use rate increases.

You may have also noticed two things that are very different about your utility bill this year, one is that the Debt Retirement Charge for residential customers is gone. In addition, the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit credit of 10% of your bill has also been removed by the government. Both of those changes happened on your bills beginning with January 2016 consumption and resulted in a net increase of almost \$9.00 per month for the average residential customer.

AND THE SURVEY SAID....

We received over 200 responses to our first customer satisfaction survey this past fall. Thank you for those who took the time to respond and return your survey. We appreciated the comments. Overwhelmingly, your comments told us that you are concerned about the high cost of your bills, and that you would like more information about understanding your bill.

WHAT'S WITH THE HIGH COST OF YOUR BILL

Kenora Hydro is strictly regulated by the Ontario Energy Board for the rates we charge our customers. There are annual rate applications that must be filed and approved by the OEB for any rate changes by each utility. The portion of your monthly bill that Kenora Hydro receives is about 21%, or \$31.75 per month on an average 800 kWh residential bill. This is referred to as the “delivery” charge, as further explained below. The rest of the bill is charged to you and remitted to other provincial and federal agencies, be it the cost of power, transmission charges, network service charges and the HST. The utility is not responsible for these charges. We are responsible for collecting them and remitting them.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BILL

The OEB instructs utilities including Kenora Hydro on the layout and wording of your electricity bill. The term “delivery charge” is in fact a monthly service fee that incorporates many different charges that are necessary to maintain service to your home whether you use any power or not. Even if you do not use your phone or internet you are still billed a monthly fee. This is very similar to our delivery charge and includes the costs of billing, administration, tree trimming, trouble calls, capital improvements, maintenance, regulatory charges, etc. The OEB has a tool online where you can input your “On-peak, Mid-peak and Off-peak” percentage use, and it will re-calculate your bill, and provide descriptions for each of the line items on your bill. You can also choose another utility, and see how the same bill would compare if you were billed by another utility, such as Hydro One. Go to www.ontarioenergyboard.ca

- Click on Consumer
- Click on Bill Calculators – Your Electricity Utility
- Select your Utility from the drop down list
- Input your consumption information
- Calculate

Each of the line items on your bill is explained by the OEB. This tool is showing May 1, 2016 rates, so if you are trying to recalculate one of your bills that is either on the pre-May 1 Time of Use rates, or if you are looking at a bill that crosses over May 1, you will not get an exact recalculation from this tool. Don't forget to back out the cost of your sewer and water charges when you are looking at your utility bill. The sewer and water charges are billed to you by the City of Kenora.

We also encourage you to sign up for our online tool for viewing your consumption and prior bill history. You can watch your hourly, daily and monthly consumption, and see where you are using the most power, and at what time, giving you the opportunity to shift that use to an Off-peak or Mid-peak period, which should save you money. The more aware you are of your consumption patterns and the cost of the power that you are using, the better equipped you will be to change your patterns and save on the cost of power.

CALL "ONTARIO ONE-CALL" BEFORE YOU DIG

Planting a tree, building a deck or a fence? Contact ON1Call first to get a locate so you can dig safely. Remember, you are liable for any damage or injury caused by interfering with any buried infrastructure.

Request your free locate online or call 1-800-400-2255. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

WHAT IS THE O.E.S.P?

This is a new program launched by the OEB to assist low income consumers with the cost of electricity. If you qualify you will receive a monthly credit on your utility bill. For more information on this program, call 1-855-831-8151 or go online to see if you qualify. This program is not administered by your local utility, it is a Provincial program.

Check out your hourly consumption, view your bills, receive your bills electronically ! It's easy, and it's powerful.

Go to www.kenorahydro.ca click on this link to sign up now.

Go paperless!

View your Kenora Hydro Electric account online

Make the switch to myAccount

[Register or login here](#)



Ontario Energy Board

NEW ONTARIO ELECTRICITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Ontario Electricity Support Program helps reduce electricity bills for low-income households with a monthly on-bill credit.

The amount of the credit will depend on how many people live in your house and your combined household income. Find out if you are eligible and how to apply.

THERE'S HELP FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

OntarioElectricitySupport.ca / 1-855-831-8151 (toll-free within Ontario)

Contact Us:

For account changes, billing inquiries, moving, opening or closing an account, call City Hall 467-2000. If you have comments about our service, how we can improve, or what you would like to see in our next newsletter: 467-2075, or email info@kenorahydro.ca. For information about the OEB, www.ontarioenergyboard.ca, or 1-877-632-2727.