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## **For immediate release**

March 8, 2005

### **OEB establishes uniform charge for utility pole use**

**Toronto** – The Ontario Energy Board yesterday established rates for telecommunication and cable companies wanting to use electric utility poles for the purpose of supporting transmission lines. The ruling follows an application by the Canadian Cable Telecommunications Association (CCTA) on behalf of 23 CCTA members who operate systems in Ontario.

In the past, the CCTA members have rented space on utilities' poles under private contracts. Those contracts came to an end in 1996. Since then, the parties have been unable to reach further agreements with respect to rates.

The Board's Decision sets an annual province-wide usage charge of \$22.35 per pole. At this point, the Board will not set the terms and conditions of access but will allow both sides to begin negotiations.

The Board considers utility poles as essential facilities and, as such, feels its ruling is in the public interest.

The Board's decision and order amends all distributors' licences to require the application of the approved charge. Distributors may apply for a different charge where they believe their costs are not appropriately represented by the approved charge.

The Ontario Energy Board regulates the province's electricity and natural gas sectors in the public interest. It envisions a healthy and efficient energy sector with informed consumers, and works towards this vision through regulatory processes that are effective, fair and transparent.

For more information on the Board, please visit our web site at [www.oeb.gov.on.ca](http://www.oeb.gov.on.ca) or contact the Customer Service Centre at 416-314-2455 or toll-free at 1-877-632-2727.

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