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VIA E-MAIL AND WEB POSTING

May 30, 2008

To: All Licensed Electricity Distributors
All Participants in Consultation Process EB-2007-0709
All Other Interested Parties

**Re: Farm Stray Voltage Consultation - Board Staff Discussion Paper
Board File No.: EB-2007-0709**

On June 22, 2007, the Ontario Energy Board (the "Board") received a Directive from the Ontario Minister of Energy requiring the Board to implement such measures as the Board considers necessary to address the issue of stray voltage as it affects the farm sector. A copy of the Directive is available on the 'Farm Stray Voltage' [webpage](#) of the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca (from the Board's homepage, select 'OEB Key Initiatives' from the 'Industry Relations' drop down menu tab).

In response to the Directive, the Board initiated a consultation process in order to solicit input from interested parties regarding stray voltage, its potential impact on the farm sector and the identification of measures that could be implemented by the Board to mitigate this impact. As part of the consultation process Board staff formed a Farm Stray Voltage Consultative Group consisting of representatives of farm customers, electricity distributors, and other stakeholder groups with experience in some aspect of stray voltage and its effects on farm operations. In meetings across the province held in the fall of 2007, Board staff met with farm customers, farm equipment and service suppliers, representatives of farm organizations, and current and former distribution utility personnel among others. A stakeholder consultation conference was held in Toronto on December 5, 2007.

Today the Board has posted a Board staff Discussion Paper that provides basic information on farm stray voltage and its potential impact on farm operations; on measures distributors can use to mitigate contributions to farm stray voltage from distribution systems; and on approaches other jurisdictions have used to address this issue. The Discussion Paper sets out staff views on the main issues arising from the farm stray voltage consultation, and provides for the purpose of stakeholder discussion and written comment proposed options that could form the basis for a regulatory framework, elements of which could be implemented to address farm stray voltage in Ontario.

Also posted are three reports prepared by expert consultants at the request of Board staff:

- a) *Literature Review and Synthesis of Research Findings on the Impact of Stray Voltage on Farm Operations* by Douglas J. Reinemann, Ph.D;
- b) *Regulatory Approaches to Addressing the Impact of Stray Voltage on Farm Operations* by BDR NorthAmerica Inc.; and
- c) *Stray Voltage Mitigation* by Kinectrics Inc.

Written Comments on the Board Staff Discussion Paper

Written comments from interested parties on the staff Discussion Paper are invited. Details on how to provide written comments are set out below. The Board would be assisted by written comments on any or all aspects of the Board staff Discussion Paper.

Cost Awards Update

Cost awards are available to eligible participants under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* for their participation in this consultation. In its *Decision on Cost Eligibility* dated October 11, 2007 and *Supplementary Decision on Cost Eligibility* dated November 29, 2007, the Board determined that the following participants are eligible for cost awards:

Energy Probe Foundation
Wireless Electrical and Electromagnetic Pollution

Eligible participants should note that Appendix A contains important information regarding cost awards for activities related to this consultation, in particular, a revision to the number of hours available for cost award claims in relation to the preparation of written comments on the Board staff Discussion Paper.

Costs awarded will be recovered from all licensed electricity distributors based on their respective distribution revenues, with the exception of the following distributors that have identified themselves to the Board as not having farm customers:

E.L.K. Energy Inc.
EnWin Utilities Limited
Orillia Power
PowerStream Inc.
Toronto Hydro
Woodstock Hydro Services Inc.

Instructions for Filing Written Comments

The Board encourages participation in this process by all interested parties. Those who wish to provide written comments on the staff Discussion Paper must do so by **4:45 PM on July 11, 2008**.

All filings in relation to this matter must be addressed to the Board Secretary. They must quote file number **EB-2007-0709** and include your name, address, telephone number and, where available, an e-mail address and fax number.

Two paper copies of each filing must be provided, and should be sent to:

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street
Suite 2700
Toronto, Ontario
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The Board requests that interested parties make every effort to provide electronic copies of their filings in searchable/unrestricted Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format, and to submit their filings through the Board's web portal at www.errr.oeb.gov.on.ca. A user ID is required to submit documents through the Board's web portal. If you do not have a user ID, please visit the "e-Filings Services" page on the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca, and fill out a user ID password request. Additionally, interested parties are requested to follow the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlines in the document entitled "RESS Document Preparation – A Quick Guide" also found on the e-Filings Services webpage. If the Board's web portal is not available, electronic copies of filings may be filed by e-mail at boardsec@oeb.gov.on.ca. Those that do not have internet access should provide a CD or diskette containing their filing in PDF format.

All written comments on the Board staff Discussion Paper will be posted on the 'Farm Stray Voltage' [webpage](#) of the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca and can be viewed once posted by selecting 'OEB Key Initiatives' from the 'Industry Relations' drop down menu tab on the Board's home page. This material, along with other posted documents including the Board staff Discussion Paper and consultants' reports will also be available for public inspection at the Board's office during normal business hours.

Questions relating to this consultation can be directed to Stephen Cain at 416-544-5162 or by e-mail at stephen.cain@oeb.gov.on.ca. The Board's toll-free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

Original signed by

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary

Appendix A

To Letter Dated May 30, 2008

Cost Awards Update

Cost Award Eligible Activities and Hours - Revised

Cost awards will be available to eligible participants for the following activities:

- Preparing for and attending the meeting of interested parties convened on December 5, 2007 to review and discuss Board staff's preliminary findings and proposals
- Preparing written comments on the Board staff Discussion Paper

The maximum number of hours for which cost awards will be available for each of the eligible activities, originally specified in a Decision on Cost Award Eligibility dated October 11, 2007, has been revised as shown in italics below:

Activity	Maximum Eligible Hours per Participant/Organization
Meeting of Interested Parties (including attendance, preparation for and reporting on)	Actual meeting hours X 1.5
Written Comments on Staff Discussion Paper	30

Information as to the schedule for cost award claim submissions by eligible participants will be provided at a later date.

Note on Cost Awards

When determining the amount of the cost awards, the Board will apply the principles set out in section 5 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*. The maximum hourly rates set out in the Board's Cost Awards Tariff will also be applied.

The Board will use the process set out in section 12 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* to implement the payment of the cost awards. Therefore, the Board will act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards in this process.

For more information on this process, please see the Board's *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* and the October 27, 2005 letter regarding the rationale for the Board acting as a clearing house for the cost award payments. These documents can be found on the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca on the "Rules, Codes, Guidelines and Forms" webpage.